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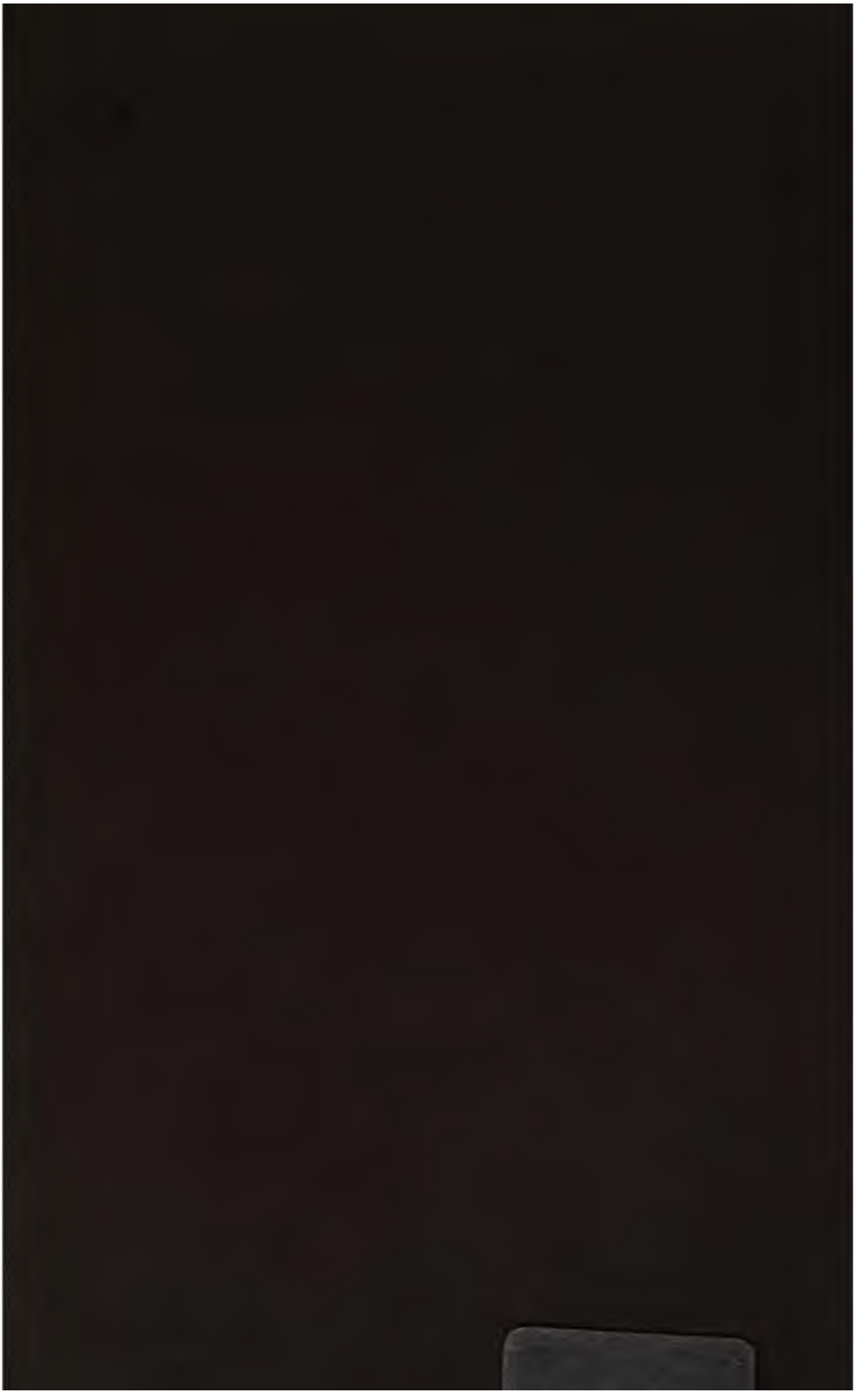
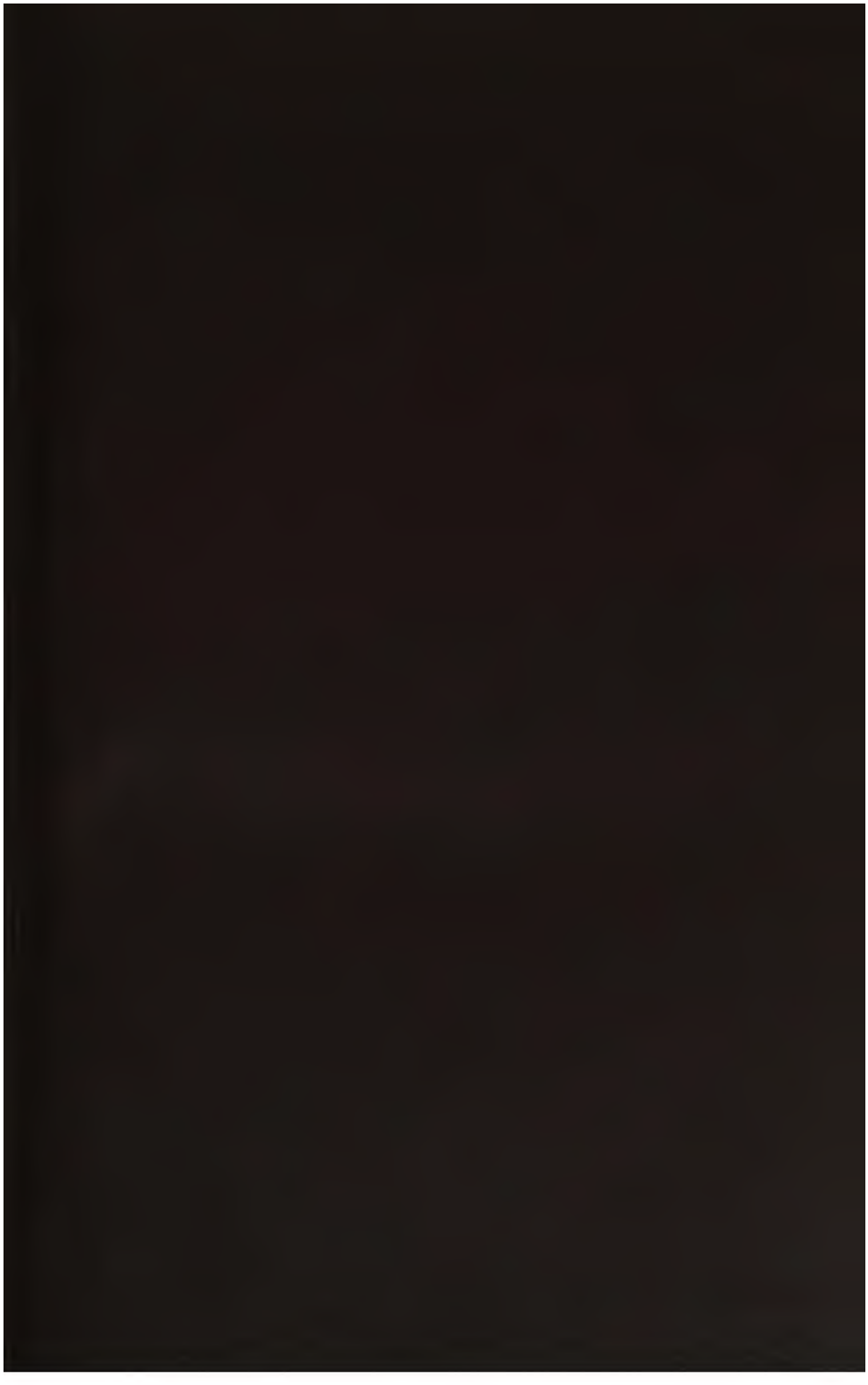
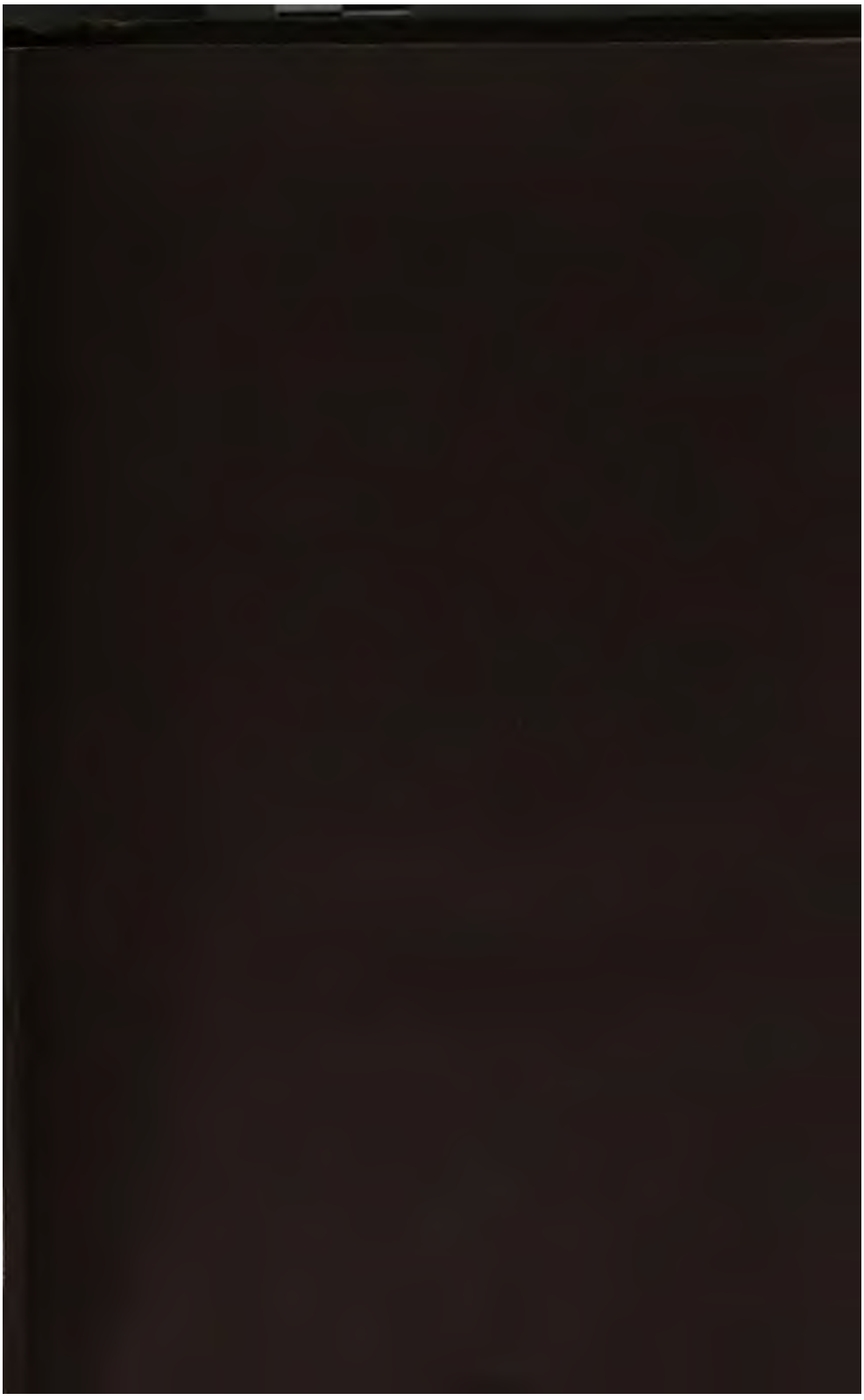


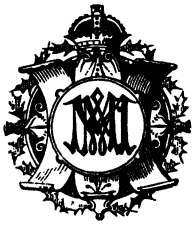




# OCCASIONAL ESSAYS.

BY

SAMUEL SMITH.



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# PREFACE.

THE essays published in this volume are, for the most part, reprints of papers written at different times during the past fifteen years. The reader will no doubt perceive that one or two of them are somewhat early productions and need a little indulgence. The contrast between the two papers on America, is explained by the fact that the first reflected the dark hues that tinged the political firmament before the outbreak of the civil war, whereas the second caught the glow of patriotism which prevailed in the Northern States for some time after the conclusion of that contest. Looking from our present stand-point, we should say that the first took too dark, the second too bright a view of American institutions; politics have indeed relapsed into a state of corruption which appears to be chronic in that country, but the forces for good which abide in the social and religious life of the people, will neutralise in great measure the evils that cling to its political system.

The last Essay of this series has already appeared as part of a larger volume.

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# THE COMPARATIVE VITALITY OF ANCIENT AND MODERN CIVILIZATION.

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It must often have occurred to those who have studied with care the history of their race, and to none so much as the thoughtful student of Ancient History, that the progress of mankind and the march of civilization have been marked by strange vicissitudes; that there have been frequent alternations in the tide of human progress, ebbings as well as flowings in the stream of social improvement; that the rapid advances of one age in knowledge and refinement have repeatedly been arrested and even reversed in the following epoch, and that nations once privileged to lead the van in the march of progress, have one after the other betrayed that lofty trust, and paralysed by their desertion the onward movement of mankind.

So often has this phenomenon been repeated, that some persons have propounded the theory, that human progress pursues no course of regular development, but moves in a series of self-repeating cycles, ever returning to some central point from which it had originally started, and that therefore mankind, however changed to a superficial eye, continues radically the same in all that concerns their more important interests.

This theory (however ingenious) is far too sweeping in its conclusions to deserve serious consideration, but we confess there are some particular aspects in which human progress may be viewed, that suggest painful doubts as to the perpetuity of our

modern civilization, that lead us at all events, if not to question the final triumph of the cause, yet to suspect that its onward career may perhaps ere long be arrested, that the tide of civilization which is now flowing with unexampled rapidity may soon reach high-water mark, and recede for a time, leaving its shore strown with the debris of shattered systems—the ruins of our social fabric.

This reflection is more immediately suggested by the study of ancient history. It is there that we trace the most rapid progress of civilization, and the most complete development it attained, until we come down to a comparatively recent period. We perceive in Greece and Rome, at their height, a degree of knowledge and refinement which has scarcely yet been surpassed. We find in them many of the elements of civilization carried to a rare pitch of perfection, a literature of surpassing beauty, intellectual culture of the loftiest order, art carried to an ideal excellence and political systems of the most comprehensive kind.

Two thousand years ago, it might have seemed reasonable to augur an unbroken career of prosperity to the human race, to infer that the process of development, then so conspicuous, would be followed by no fatal relapse; and yet we find the bright sunshine of ancient history succeeded by a disastrous eclipse—the principles of liberty, justice, and intelligence, after a long career of success, fairly submerged under a torrent of ignorance, anarchy, and wrong; the fair landscape of ancient civilization converted into a bleak and barren wilderness, while for many long centuries, the death-sleep of the middle ages seemed to deny all hope of a brighter future.

It is hardly possible to contemplate this picture without feeling some misgivings as to the durability of our modern civilization. The melancholy reflection will occasionally obtrude itself that perhaps, after all, our boasted progress may conceal the germ of some fatal disease that may again paralyze the finest energies of mankind, and leave us morally, if not materially, in the position we occupied many ages ago.

Nevertheless it is our settled conviction that no good grounds exist for this suspicion. We believe there is no proper analogy between ancient and modern civilization. We believe that those elements of decay which existed in the systems of antiquity have disappeared or been neutralized by more potent principles in modern times, and we have a strong and confident faith in the uninterrupted advancement of the human race in all that chiefly concerns their moral and material welfare.

We propose, then, to state the grounds of this belief. To indicate the cardinal points in which the civilization of the ancient world differed from our own; those principles which in the one case led to its decay and which in the other should preserve its vitality unimpaired.

But before proceeding further let us briefly state what we understand by "civilization;" for it must be obvious that the conclusions to which we are led will be materially affected by the latitude of meaning we attach to that term. We feel that this is a difficult task, for the word in question comprehends so great a variety of ideas, and has its boundaries so loosely defined, that it is scarcely possible to furnish a definition that will secure general assent. The utmost we shall attempt, then, is to interpret as faithfully as we can, the meaning which the usage of the language has attached to it.

Now, we would observe in the first place, that civilization strictly speaking cannot be regarded as a fixed and determinate state, whose essence and limits are unalterably defined; it is rather a varying quantity preserving its identity by the presence of a few cardinal principles, but susceptible of constant modification and change. Civilization is not a fixed aggregate of properties which a people can enter into possession of at one moment, and altogether lose at another, it is rather a process of growth and development which no nation, however barbarous, is altogether without, and no community, however refined, has attained to, in its completeness. It is no doubt true in the common usance of language

that we speak of nations as quite destitute of civilization, and yet a moment's reflection must convince us that even the rudest tribes possess the germs of some qualities which constitute the essence of every form of civilization. Therefore, philosophically speaking, civilization is an attribute which belongs to every age and nation, and only differs in the fulness and perfection of its development. But as we wish to treat our subject popularly, we shall not confine ourselves to this exact form of expression, but shall speak of nations as uncivilized, when their attainments are feeble and insignificant, and contrast them with races that we style civilized, though their attainments may come far short of a high standard of excellence.

The next point we have to deal with is the analysis of the elements that go to form that complex state called civilization; and here we would observe that this term as applied to human society, is in the main objective; it shows itself by outward and visible signs; it is the external expression of certain principles within, but it is applied with most propriety to the outward manifestation and not to the secret springs of action.

For example, a tribe of savages—could such a case be supposed—might be suddenly inspired with the deepest knowledge of truth, but they would not be entitled to the epithet of civilized, till their intelligence had shown itself in their altered customs. So long as they remained destitute of physical comforts, of social institutions, of agencies for the diffusion of thought, it would be a misapplication of language to call them civilized, even though individually their minds might be enlightened in a high degree. It may be objected that this inner intelligence could not co-exist with the outward forms of barbarism, that external refinement would closely accompany internal enlightenment; and we grant that the two in the order of time are almost identical. But in the order of causality there is a well-marked distinction, and we understand that civilization, as the term is usually applied, has to do with the effect, rather than with the cause.

What are, then, those external and visible signs which attest civilization, what are those properties, attributes, or qualities which are present to the mind when we speak of a people as being civilized?

The first element that deserves to be mentioned, is the existence of *Social Order.*

Most of its other properties are more or less dependent upon this one, for till human society organizes some system of law, and enforces obedience to it, till the rights of property and the liberty of individuals are defined, it is vain to expect much progress in any other direction. The first condition of social improvement is the establishment and recognition of authority, the submission of individual will to the collective judgment of the community. This principle of order may be more or less allied to the correlative principles of justice and intelligence; in a very rude state of society it may often be enforced with little regard to wisdom or equity, still, however we may view it, the element of social order is indispensable to every form of civilization and may fairly be regarded as the corner-stone of the edifice.

But the organization of society can make but little progress without the diffusion of *Virtue* among its constituent parts. Till mankind have learned to practise habits of self-restraint, obedience, industry, and self-denial, there can exist no elements of cohesion in the social fabric. So long as men obey their brute instincts and give way to the impulse of passion, the establishment of social order is hopeless, and therefore a certain amount of moral restraint must prevail among society, before civilization can make any sensible progress. We may be asked why we do not include religion among the constituent parts of civilization, in so much as it lies at the root of all morality, and forms the most vital principle of all social improvement, to which we would reply, that civilization, according to our hypothesis, deals rather with outward forms than inward principles; it contemplates the

aspect which society presents, but not its springs of life We freely grant that religious faith is the most power- all agents in producing those visible effects which constitute civilization, but it is not itself a part of it.

For example, to borrow our previous metaphor, let us suppose that a savage tribe, by some miraculous process, were suddenly illuminated by divine truth. We would not regard them as civilized, till their internal convictions were shown in the discharge of moral duties; and only in proportion as this outer phase was more fully developed, would we feel disposed to accord them a higher rank in civilization, and we would be equally warranted in bestowing the epithet, whether this practise of moral virtues proceeded from the highest motives or not. It seems to us, therefore, that religious faith, though the true basis of moral virtue, is not in itself a part of civilization, but those habits which it fosters, such as temperance, chastity, truthfulness, industry, and self-denial, generally termed the moral virtues, are a most important part in civilization; for the practice or neglect of these duties is one of the most distinctive traits in the social economy of any people.

The next element in civilization which requires to be noted, is *Intelligence*, by which we mean the knowledge more or less perfect of the laws of nature, and the conditions of our existence, or more generally that stock of knowledge which is gathered by observation and reflection. It is hardly necessary to enlarge on this point, as it must be obvious to all that an acquaintance with truth is a condition and a sign of all social improvement, and in measuring the progress of any society in civilization, our attention is at once directed to the amount of intelligence it possesses, as a primary ground on which its title to that epithet can be vindicated.

But nothing more immediately conveys to the mind the idea of civilization, than the existence of *Material Prosperity*, in fact we are too prone, when contrasting the civilization of nations,

either in ancient or modern times, to make their material greatness the criterion of our judgment, and certainly it cannot be denied that there is no more visible symptom of a highly civilized state of society, than the general diffusion of affluence and physical comfort, while no token more surely bespeaks a rude and barbarous condition, than general penury and physical want.

We conceive, then, that the four elements we have enumerated, namely, social order, virtue, intelligence, and material prosperity, are the most characteristic features of that state of society we call civilized, and enter more or less fully into every stage of that process which we style civilization. It would not be difficult to point out various other properties of which the same might be asserted, but we imagine that the foregoing comprehend most of these minor distinctions, and are sufficient for the purpose we contemplate, which is simply to convey a clear intelligible notion of what we understand by civilization.

We would remark, then, lastly, that when we speak of a people as highly civilized, we designate one where society is organized in the manner best fitted to promote the welfare of every one, where the social institutions are most skilfully contrived to combine individual liberty with the public good. We contemplate a state of society where the moral virtues are largely esteemed and practised, where the citizens are sober, honest, and industrious, conscientious in the discharge of their social and domestic duties, and alive to the better impulses of their nature. We also picture the existence of a high state of intelligence, where knowledge is largely diffused, and the area of ignorance comparatively limited, where the arts and sciences are carried to great perfection, and where the doctrines of philosophy expounded by the few are utilized for the benefit of the many.

But our notion of civilization would be incomplete, were we not to add to the above the presence of wealth and opulence, a

large command of the material comforts of life, and the diffusion among the people of the elements of physical enjoyment.

These circumstances constitute a high state of civilization, and our aim is to show that there is nothing in the teaching of ancient history to lead us to conclude that all or any of them will disappear or decay in our modern social system, but that there is every reason to hope for a regular and progressive development of each and all of them.

We need hardly observe that in speaking of ancient civilization, we refer to that of Greece and Rome, for as the systems of these people embraced nearly all that was valuable in the ancient world, we think it unnecessary to refer to the less perfect forms that were developed among other races, such, for instance, as those of the Egyptians, the Chaldees, or the Persians Our acquaintance, moreover, with the history of these eastern nations is so imperfect, that we can form no accurate conception of the spirit of their institutions, or argue conclusively regarding their growth or decline, but the varied literature of Greece and Rome reflects, as in a mirror, a faithful image of the spirit of their institutions, of their social economy, of their moral and mental, as well as of their external and physical development. We conceive, then, that these nations form the best and most complete types of ancient civilization, and present the most favourable contrast that antiquity affords to that form which has been developed in the present age.

Now, in surveying the history of these nations, there appear to be three special causes of decay, which vitiated their civilization, and sowed the seeds of its destruction. There was, in the first place, the *absence of sincere religious belief;* in the second, *a contempt for industry;* and, in the third, *a false and illusory system of philosophy.* We believe that these three points comprehend most of the elements of decay that undermined and finally overthrew the ancient forms of civilization.

Let us consider the influence of the first of these—the want

of true religious faith ; and here we would take the opportunity of observing that no social compact can be well and faithfully observed without the existence of some form of religious faith to leaven the public mind and elevate the public conscience.

In a community that has thrown off all respect for religion, government and social order become impossible. It is vain to allege that the principle of expediency, or a regard for self-interest will induce mankind to submit to those restraints which are essential to the well-being of society.

No artificial mechanism of law can supply the place of a just moral principle within. Once eradicate all sense of moral responsibility from the human breast, and no system of institutions, however skilfully contrived, will control the turbulent passions of men. When once a nation becomes thoroughly atheistical, anarchy and dissolution inevitably follow. When France forsook her faith for the worship of human reason, her social fabric crumbled into atoms, and not till she repented of her apostasy did she escape from that wild chaos of confusion into which she was plunged. In all ages of the world there is abundant testimony to the truth of this principle, and no reflection is more frequently suggested by the study of ancient history, than that the decay of national vigour and material prosperity was usually coincident with a corruption of public morals and a deterioration of private virtue.

But, here the question will probably be asked, if the decay of ancient civilization is chiefly to be ascribed to the want of religious faith, how can we account for its rapid growth without assuming the active operation of that principle, and in what sense can Pagan nations be said to be influenced by religious faith? In answer to this supposed difficulty we would reply that civilization may be carried to a certain point, without the influence of true religious faith, though it is impossible to sustain it long at a high level without the presence of that conservative element, and this explanation will partly account for the apparent anomaly alluded to, but we would also observe that in the early days of

Greece and Rome, when their vital powers were most active, the religious sentiment was far from being absent. In the early history of both nations, but more especially of Rome, we can trace the existence of a healthy moral temperament. A high feeling of conscientiousness prevailed, and a profound sense of duty which prompted to lofty deeds of heroism and self-denial. The virtues of truthfulness, temperance, and fortitude were held in high repute and practised to an extent that might shame some European communities of the present day, and in some of the writings of these heathen philosophers, we find a system of morals so pure and exalted as to fill us with admiration for the loftiness of soul which gave them birth.

But, while we admit all this, we would carefully guard ourselves against being supposed to institute a comparison between heathen and Christian virtue, in so far as their moral value is concerned. We are fully conscious that the motives which animate the devout Christian are not to be compared with the loftiest aspirations which a Pagan philosopher or patriot could cherish. The latter seldom reached higher than a regard for the praise of their fellow-men, a standard of ethics both variable and weak, and not to be compared with that rule of life which the humblest Christian sets before him, even obedience to the will of his Master in heaven.

It is, however, beyond doubt that some of the active virtues were cultivated to a great extent among the early Greeks and Romans, and they constituted the materials out of which the future greatness of the two nations was formed. They lay at the bottom of these great national efforts, those noble impulses of public feeling which illumine the pages of ancient history. But the primitive virtue of the Greeks and Romans rested upon no permanent foundation, it was chiefly the offspring of circumstances, the product of that arduous career through which they had to struggle upward to national greatness. The citizens of Greece and Rome were frugal, temperate and virtuous, only so

long as they had to fight for existence, and were exempted from the temptations of luxury and sloth, but when these conditions were reversed, when political supremacy was attained and a high degree of wealth and refinement was diffused among the people, the essential hollowness of their moral principles became manifest. The manly virtues which were developed in the school of adversity, melted away under the relaxing influence of prosperity; and when Greece and Rome had reached to the outward eye the zenith of their greatness, the vital principle of growth within had become dead—an utter disregard for religion infected the entire framework of society; all sense of moral obligation vanished, and at the time of the Christian Era, the flood of corruption had swept away all that was great and venerable in their early institutions.

It appears to us that there can be no reasonable doubt, that the grand cause which subverted the greatness and civilization of the States of Antiquity was the want of an effective and enduring stimulus to moral rectitude—in other words, the absence of a pure system of religious belief. It was the want of this principle which rendered prosperity and good fortune so fatal to the manly virtue of their citizens. They fell a prey to the enervating influence of luxury and ease. The possession of wealth and power was made subservient to the gratification of their baser passions, and no sooner did a city or state rise to opulence and security than the energies of its citizens were paralysed, their virtue undermined, and a train of causes set in motion that silently but surely worked its downfall. The history of every ancient people presents precisely the same features. In its early career the struggle with adversity elicited many generous qualities; honesty, temperance, endurance, and self-denial, were nurtured by the stern discipline to which it was subjected; but when these virtues were rewarded by outward prosperity, they perished along with the necessitous circumstances which gave them birth.

There was no moral principle within strong enough to resist the seductions of luxury and sloth, and thus we find all the nations of antiquity demoralised by prosperity and succumbing to its insiduous attacks—and we contend that the cardinal difference between the vitality of ancient and modern civilization, consists in the antidote which Christianity supplies to the enervating influence of prosperity, the moral panoply in which it shelters its votaries from the allurements of sloth, and the seductions of luxury.

But while we regard the absence of a controlling moral power as the primary cause of the overthrow of ancient civilization, we are far from under-estimating the influence of other and subordinate causes in bringing about that result. We are disposed to attach great weight to the second of those we specified at the outset—viz., *the contempt for industry generally felt among the nations of antiquity.*

Putting aside the influence of sound moral sentiments, no agency seems to have contributed so much in modern times to the social and material progress of mankind, as the spread of just notions regarding the dignity of labour.

It may seem to some persons a strange and incomprehensible appointment, that so many of the nobler interests of mankind should be associated with so common a thing as industrial application, and yet we think the testimony of history is conclusive to the fact that those nations who have applied themselves assiduously to industrial pursuits, and have esteemed the citizens who discharged with zeal the duties of their calling, have usually been most successful in securing all the other blessings of civilization; they have generally enjoyed the largest amount of social order and contentment, and have been most noted for the diffusion of intelligence and refinement.

We believe that next to the influence of religious faith, the most powerful guarantee of national prosperity is a full recognition of the divine appointment that by the sweat of our brow

we must eat bread. In fact we can in no other way account for the beneficial influence which steady industry exerts on the character of individuals and communities, than by supposing that it is one of the conditions which Providence has annexed to a happy existence here below, and one of the instruments he has devised for disciplining our moral nature. * Now, in reviewing the history of the ancient world we are struck by the remarkable coincidence between the various forms of civilization it presents, in this particular respect, that they all united in disparaging industrial labour, and contemned those classes who made it their employment. The only pursuits that were held in high estimation by the ancient world, were those of arms, politics and literature, or the fine arts, but to labour at some industrial calling as a means of livelihood was to renounce the character of gentleman; and in consequence the occupation was consigned to an inferior caste, while the citizens attended to the affairs of the state; and what was this but another name for dignified idleness? The most fatal consequence of this false estimate of the duties of mankind was the growth of the system of slavery—a system which seems to have prevailed throughout the entire ancient world, and which poisoned the very life-blood of society, and ate like a cancer into the heart of its prosperity. In the Greek states, by the unanimous testimony of historians, the great majority of the inhabitants were slaves. In Athens and Sparta probably as many as three-fourths of the population were thus victimized for the benefit of the remainder. On this class were imposed most of the duties which are now discharged by the industrious middle and lower classes of society, and thus pursuits essentially honourable, became degraded by their associations.

The freemen were ashamed to descend to employments which were usually the badge of civil inferiority, and thus society came to present somewhat of the same spectacle that it now does in the Southern States of North America, an upper class of whom

the majority though too proud to work, were yet destitute of an honest means of livelihood, and consequently ever ready to foment disorder, while on the other hand, was an immense population of ignorant and discontented slaves, coerced by brute force and cherishing a deadly animosity to their masters.

But there was one aspect in which slavery in the ancient world was even more galling and oppressive than it has been in modern times; for while in the latter case, the system has been practised exclusively upon the negro race, which appears to be essentially inferior in force of character to its European Masters, and thus less sensible of the ignominy to which it has been subjected,—the servile class in the ancient world usually sprang from as good a stock as their lords. They were probably the citizens of some rival state whom the fortune of arms and the cruel usages of ancient warfare placed under the heel of their victors, or perhaps they were an unsuccessful faction on whom their political adversaries inflicted the worst penalty short of death; but whatever might be the cause, the servile classes among the Greeks and Romans were commonly the equals of their masters in physical and mental endowments, and were therefore most keenly sensible of the degradation to which they were subjected.

Hence arose the most frightful of all conflicts, those which sprang from an insurrection of the slaves. Rome, Sparta and Carthage, were alike brought to the brink of destruction through the revolt of their servile classes, and the anarchy and distrust excited by these struggles produced incalculable mischief. In fact the preponderance of the element of slavery in the ancient world, altogether deranged the proper working of its social system. It deprived the free citizens of those employments with which Providence has associated the truest satisfaction and contentment, and substituted for them a mode of life ill-calculated to promote either happiness or social usefulness.

On the other hand, it nourished a spirit of bitter animosity

between the two great classes, into which society was divided. It created in the inferior one, a keen sense of injustice and a burning desire for revenge, and on the part of the ruling caste a jealousy and distrust of their servants, which led them to practise a cruel tyranny and indulge their spite on most frivolous pretexts.

We may be condemned by some for giving an exaggerated account of the extent and influence of the system of slavery in the ancient world, for it will be remembered that the practice of agriculture among several ancient nations, was deemed highly honourable, and engaged the attention of their worthiest citizens. But here we should say that very much the same distinction must be drawn as in the case of the moral virtue of the Ancients. It is no doubt true that in the infancy of these nations, rustic pursuits were esteemed honourable, and formed the occupation of the mass of the people. Every schoolboy can quote instances in the early history of Rome, when statesmen and warriors were taken from the plough, and after the most brilliant exploits were only too happy to return to their humble homes, but it must be observed that these sentiments were confined to the rude and primitive stages of society. The citizens were only content to be husbandmen so long as their tastes were not corrupted by luxury, and while foreign conquest had not provided them with avenues to wealth and greatness; but we find that as nations acquired political power and dominion, their citizens abandoned agriculture like all other industrial pursuits, and delegated to slaves the cultivation of the soil. When the Roman empire had attained its most perfect organization under Augustus, the free rural population of Italy had been entirely supplanted by bondsmen. The land had become the property of a few wealthy magnates at Rome, who cultivated the soil by chained gangs of slaves. The yeomanry—that class which has always formed one of the most useful elements in the body politic—had disappeared from the social system of Rome, for

the provinces followed the example of the central state, and, through the whole of that vast empire a system of serfdom grew up, which paralysed its industrial progress.

On these grounds, then, we are inclined to attach great weight to the second of the causes we have assigned for the decay of ancient civilization,— viz., the contempt for industry that characterised the leading nations of antiquity. It led them to take a false view of the duties of man as a denizen of this world; they deemed those talents misapplied, which were consecrated to honest toil, and those abilities alone rightly directed, which secured fame and reputation to their possessor. The result of this false estimate was the creation of a class of bondsmen to perform the drudgery from which the proud spirit of the freeman rebelled, and this system of slavery grew with the growth of civilization, and strengthened with its strength, and at last attained such gigantic dimensions, as to sap every spring of social improvement, and render an entire reconstruction of society necessary. So deeply, indeed, had this taint infected the ancient world, that nothing short of a dissolution of the fabric could eradicate the evil, and that dissolution involved the temporary loss of many of the ornaments with which genius and taste had crowned the edifice of ancient civilization; but the process was essential to the renovation of society; for no true sense of religion, no wise political system, no industrial progress, could thrive alongside of so heinous a system of wrong.

We have now arrived at the third and last point, on which it seems to us that the civilization of antiquity was radically defective. We refer to *the prevalence of a false and illusory system of philosophy*—false alike in the means employed for arriving at the truth, and in the ends which it was intended to serve. But while we are compelled to put so unfavourable a construction upon the practical utility of ancient philosophy, we freely accord to it that admiration which no worshipper of genius can withhold.

We cordially admit that the speculations of the ancient sages were triumphs of eloquence and taste: we will even hazard the assertion that no names in the world's history are surrounded with a more splendid halo of genius, than those of Socrates and Plato.

The systems of the ancient sages were indeed distinguished by the most marvellous subtlety, and expounded with an eloquence that will echo down the most distant corridors of time, but while we are fully alive to the charms of their rhetoric and the keenness of their intellect, we are deeply impressed with the insufficiency of their philosophy to ameliorate the condition of mankind. Never since the world began, were so much learning and genius expended with so little practical result.

It would be utterly out of place here to attempt an analysis of ancient philosophy, but we will content ourselves by calling attention to two defects which lie on its very surface, and catch the attention of the most cursory student.

The first of these has reference to the end at which the sages of antiquity aimed. It was not the practical advancement of the moral or physical well-being of their kind, it was not the attainment of any tangible fruit, but simply the establishment of abstract theories, the triumph of their own speculative systems. The ancient philosophy altogether failed to exert any influence on the mass of mankind. In the department of ethics it completely lacked that earnestness and sincerity of purpose which alone could recommend it to the heart and conscience. The rival schemes were propounded, not with a desire to purify and invigorate the moral sentiments, but simply to secure assent to certain metaphysical abstractions. These ethical speculations accordingly degenerated into mere casuistry, evoking, no doubt, great subtlety of intellect, but utterly barren of any salutary effect on the public morals, and did not assist to enlighten or refine the rude instincts of right or wrong, but rather to mystify the truth by empty sophistry.

In fact, it seems scarcely to have occurred to the philosophers of ancient times, that their true mission was to light the torch of truth, to guide the erring footsteps of mankind, to be the heralds of human progress, the pioneers in the march of improvement. They conceived that knowledge was too sacred a divinity to be exposed to the rude gaze of the vulgar, too like gossamer in its texture to be applied to the practical requirements of life. Hence, we need not be surprized that *physical science* was so neglected by the ancients; they thought it beneath their dignity to prosecute researches which had no higher object than to advance the material welfare of the race. And hence this vast field of observation which has been brought to bear so powerfully in modern times on the improvement of our physical condition, and which has done so much to consolidate modern civilization, was through ignorance and prejudice overlooked by the ancients. The feeling of their sages, upon this subject, may be gathered from an anecdote concerning Archimedes, the celebrated geometrician: it is said that he would scarcely condescend to sully the dignity of his profession by lending his art to the defence of Syracuse, and though his mechanical contrivances repelled for three years the arms of Rome, and excited the amazement of the world, he felt it more of a disgrace than an honour, that the pure truths of his science should have been applied to such ignoble uses.

It is hardly possible to conceive how much the material progress of mankind was retarded by the foolish disregard of physical science. Had the same skill, ingenuity, and research, been applied to the solution of practical problems, that were lavished on fruitless speculation, it is not unlikely that some of the great discoveries of modern times might have been given to mankind two thousand years ago. But, in ancient times, philosophy took essentially a wrong direction, and not till the time of Bacon did it discover its true mission.

But the ancients not only misconceived the true aim of philosophy, they altogether mistook the right means of arriving at the

truth; both in mental and physical science they set up arbitrary theories, and afterwards attempted to reconcile them with the actual phenomena of nature, they knew not the sure process of inductive enquiry, that grand instrument for the discovery of truth which Bacon was privileged to bring to light. They wist not that the true attitude of philosophy is that of the humble observer, and that the only means of unravelling Nature's mysteries is to sit at her feet and carefully treasure up every utterance that falls from her lips. They would have deemed it ignoble drudgery to have pursued the course which has reared the noble structure of modern science, to have contented themselves with noting the footprints of the Designer, and by collating them to have inferred the nature of his designs. Their plan was to propound some imaginary scheme, which was to account for all the phenomena of the universe, and then to reconcile, as best they could, the actual facts with their whimsical theories.

This *a priori* method of reasoning was bad enough in the department of psychology, but it was tenfold worse in that of physical science, for though the inductive method of reasoning is equally applicable to either, it is more easy to solve the problems of mind than of matter by conjectural reasoning. Accordingly, we find that the failure of the ancients was more complete in physical than mental science. In the one case, their fanciful theories often approached the truth, but in the other their grotesque notions only provoke our derision.

We conceive, then, that ancient philosophy stumbled in the very threshold of its mission, it forgot that its function was to discover truth only that it might apply it to the advantage of mankind, and it mistook the true method of finding that treasure, and thus doubly failed to accomplish its end.

Under this false system it also happened that the masses of the people remained wholly unenlightened, for the metaphysics of the sages could not be brought to the level of common understandings, and physical science which on utilitarian grounds is

now so generally studied, had then no existence. The intelligence of the ancient world rested, therefore on a very narrow basis, it took no hold of the masses of the people. The abyss of ignorance was so vast and profound, that when its muddy waters were stirred up by civil strife they engulphed the thin stratum of intelligence which coated the surface. The philosophy of the ancient world had not penetrated like our own into the vitals of society, it had not sent out those countless fibres which entwine it in modern times with the tissue of human sympathies and wants, and thus build it a sure and permanent habitation, and supply it with the elixir of perpetual youth.

Such, then, in the main, are the causes to which we ascribe the decay of ancient civilization, and we think their analysis suggests little ground of despondency for the progress of mankind in the future. We think that an impartial survey of these causes will lead us to conclude that their fatal influence has been neutralised by other agencies in modern times, that they have either ceased to operate or been limited in their influence, till they have become comparatively innocuous, and that therefore so far as the analogy of ancient history is concerned, we may draw a happy augury for the growth and perpetuity of modern civilization.

This process of reasoning, however, is somewhat of a negative character and might fail to give a deep persuasion of the justice of our conclusions, unless fortified by positive arguments drawn from a direct analysis of the nature of modern civilization. We propose, then, in the second place, to subject it to such an analysis, and examine whether it contains a sufficient stock of vital power to sustain it in healthy and vigorous play.

Now, as we ascribed the downfall of ancient civilization chiefly to the want of a pure system of religious belief, we believe the existence of that principle will serve more than anything else to preserve and develop that of modern times. We have already stated that we do not treat the religious sentiment technically speaking, as a part of civilization, though we conceive

that the moral virtues of which it is the spring, form a most important element, and in this sense religion may be regarded as the final impelling power which puts in motion the wheels of that complicated machine, which we term civilization. Other agents, no doubt, may for a time usurp its functions, and perhaps, achieve a specious success, as we have seen from the history of the ancient world; but religious faith alone supplies a durable stimulus to social improvement, and provides an effectual antidote to these parasitic vices, which stifle the true progress of humanity. We hold that the great safe-guard of modern civilization lies in the spread of the pure doctrines of Christianity and their reflex influence on the moral, intellectual, and physical welfare of mankind.

It may occur to some that the spread of Christianity in the early ages of the church, and its subsequent acknowledgement through the Roman Empire, did not protect mankind from the stagnation of the Middle Ages. They may argue that its reception then, neither quickened the energies of mankind, nor indeed much elevated their moral tone, and we admit that the apparent imbecility of our faith during the Middle Ages is a subject that bears deeply on the present question, for that, if pure religious belief after being widely disseminated, suffered a complete paralysis, may not the same phenomenon be repeated in our day.

Now, without committing ourselves to any theological view of the subject, but simply regarding it by the light of human reason, we would venture to say that a deep and radical difference exists between the Christianity of primitive times and that of the present age, in so far as its social influence is concerned.

In the early ages of the church, though Christianity became the professed religion of most of Europe, it had no hold either on the intelligence or conscience of the great mass of the people. Its reception in most cases implied no process of conviction, for it was propagated in a great measure by political agency. By

the nations that occupied Western Europe, it was received with as little intelligence and inward effect as the heathen superstitions it supplanted. It is, no doubt, true that there were numbers of devout Christians in the early ages of the church, chiefly in the eastern provinces of the Empire—the sincerity and intelligence of whose faith admits of no question—for the one is attested by their constancy in persecution, and the other by the treasures of theological literature they have bequeathed to us. Still they formed but isolated fragments of the great social edifice, their influence was never such as thoroughly to permeate all the arteries of the body politic. We have no evidence which leads us to suppose that the doctrines of Christianity in the first few centuries of its existence, had such extensive currency as to elevate public opinion to their lofty standard, or even to exert that controlling influence over it, which is felt in the most backward nations of modern Christendom.

But further, Christianity was enfeebled in the Middle Ages by its universal corruption; that vitality which it possessed in the early part of its career, almost disappeared under the mass of empty forms with which it became encumbered. It lost nearly all its original spirit, it ceased to exert a wholesome moral influence, and to the immense majority of its professors, it furnished no stronger inducement to moral rectitude than the systems of paganism that preceded it.

We think that these circumstances sufficiently account for the slender influence which Christianity exerted upon the social progress of mankind, during so long a period after its promulgation. But the Reformation, in the sixteenth century, gave it a fresh impulse and a vastly augmented power. It stripped off that lifeless mask which had so long disguised its features, and restored it to its proper place in the hearts and consciences of men. Now, we will not go so far as to assert that the religious sentiment has been steadily increasing in depth and intensity ever since that great revival, nor will we venture to affirm that

its vital and efficacious influence on men's hearts is greater now than it was then, but we will venture to assert that the area of intelligent religious belief has, with some temporary reactions, been steadily expanding ever since the Reformation. The perceptions of mankind on the subject of religious duty and moral obligation have been constantly acquiring additional clearness, and the numbers of those who at all events recognise intellectually the lofty claims of the Christian faith, have been rapidly increasing. All the signs of the times point to a continued widening of the area of religious life, and as a necessary consequence, to the adoption of a higher standard of national morals. The atmosphere of intelligent Christian opinion is leavening legislation, as it has never done before, and placing all the relations of human society on a sounder and happier basis. We think the great safe-guard of modern civilization consists in the wide diffusion of the truth of our holy religion, and we see no good reason to fear an "eclipse of faith," but much reason to hope, as the ages roll on, that the doctrines of Christianity will exert a more and more salutary influence on the progress of mankind.

But, secondly, we conceive that modern civilization possesses a great element of vitality in the *general diffusion of intelligence* among the people. It may be urged that this principle is substantially the same with that we have just discussed, in so far as the prevalence of enlightened moral and religious views is but one particular manifestation of intelligence, and we grant that this may be partially true in a strict philosophical view of the question. We feel, however, that it is desirable to distinguish between religious belief and general intelligence, as the two agencies are usually viewed apart, and convey to most minds distinct ideas.

We would urge, then, as our second ground for believing in the perpetuity of modern civilization, the wide and general diffusion of intelligence among all existing civilized nations.

Whatever doubts may possibly be entertained of the future

moral development of mankind, (and we admit that some scope exists for such doubts), we can perceive no room whatsoever for questioning the steady intellectual development of the human race.

For many centuries past that process has gone on uninterruptedly. It has not experienced, like the religious element, occasional reactions or temporary visitations of languor or blight. Ever since that great awakening from the sleep of the Middle Ages, the area of intelligence has been constantly enlarging, and the domain of human thought has been as rapidly extending. It appears to us, that the stratum of intelligence is now so broad and deep, as to be able to withstand any irruption of ignorance or brute force.

There is not the remotest chance of its being buried under the debris of social convulsions or swept away by floods of barbarism, like the learning and genius of antiquity. There are many considerations which tend to inspire us with this confidence.

The material appliances for the diffusion of knowledge, in the present age, are vastly superior to those of any former epoch, and are such as to place within the reach of every one the means of becoming moderately intelligent. We need scarcely allude to the immense stimulus given to knowledge by the discovery of printing. That invention alone has given the civilization of modern times an incalculable advantage over that of antiquity. It is impossible now that the precious fruits of genius can be lost to mankind, as, to our misfortune, has so largely befallen the choicest products of ancient learning.

The invention of printing has virtually rendered truths once discovered imperishable. It provides for the intellectual treasures of mankind a stronghold from which they never can be dislodged. It enables each generation to start from the loftiest eminence to which their ancestors have climbed, to apply to the solution of the problems of their day all the wisdom accumulated in byegone ages. Independently of every other agency, we think the inven-

tion of printing alone sufficient to assure mankind against any relapse into barbarism.

But there is no agency in modern times which tends so powerfully to the spread of intelligence as the newspaper. It has multiplied beyond conception the advantages accruing from the art of printing. It has given within the last century as great an extension to the area of intelligence, as the discovery of printing did three hundred years before. There is indeed no feature so strikingly characteristic of the present age as the marvellous ascendancy acquired by the press. No agency of which history gives us any account has had a tithe of its influence in organizing, leading, and directing the opinions of men. Whether for good or evil it has given a force to public opinion which renders it the mightiest potentate of the age, and no view of modern civilization would be complete which failed to give due prominence to the vast influence exerted by the press. We have already stated that we consider intelligence in the abstract, that is to say, knowledge, however it may be applied, as an element in civilization and no one can possibly dispute the great service which the press has rendered to this power; but it may be more open to doubt whether the knowledge diffused by the press has always been wisely and beneficently applied, for it is quite possible that an agency well fitted to impart knowledge may through its moral obliquity prove utterly mischievous.

Now, we believe that at various times and among different nations, the press has been abused for pernicious purposes. It has at times inflamed the savage passions of the mob, and, as in France, has led the attack on all that is sacred and revered among men. At other times, as we have seen it in our country in past ages, it has been the menial slave of a worthless court, but after duly weighing its shortcomings we will boldly assert, that on the whole, it has, during the last century, done as much for the advancement of all the social interests of mankind as any agency that could be named.

In our own country, the improvement in the tone and conduct of the press has been most striking. In its early history it was shamefully corrupt and grossly libellous and untruthful, but just as it grew in influence, it threw off this offensive garb. It found that its true interest was best subserved by a faithful adherence to the cause of truth and equity, and so at last it has come to pass that the English press is one of the brightest ornaments of the country. It has become the natural avenue, by which the active intelligence of the people brings its collective wisdom to bear on every subject of passing interest, and that intelligence is on the whole so wisely and faithfully directed, that it has become the unseen but real arbiter of the nation's destinies. It has become the exponent of the most educated, thoughtful, and high-minded section of the community, and has thus led public opinion, and paved the way for every movement in the path of progress.

We do not claim for the conductors of the press motives of spotless purity, it may be, perhaps in the majority of cases, that they are regulated by no higher principle than that of self-interest, but this machinery is so admirably constructed for the promotion of truth, that self-interest in the long run is almost always identical with the course of duty. The atmosphere of free discussion, so essential to the healthy action of the press, lays bare each false principle, unmasks each unworthy motive, and thus enforces a more scrupulous regard for truthfulness and honour, than the mere sense of duty alone could impose.

The press in England has thus become the palladium of her liberties, the bulwark of her institutions, and one of the most powerful agents in accelerating her social progress. It is no doubt true that in selecting our own country we have chosen the example most favourable to this agency, and it may be asserted, and not without justice, that in no other country has the press been so powerful an auxiliary to the cause of civilization. Under the various despotisms that prevail on the Continent, it

has always been more or less trammelled, and unhappily at the present day,* it has almost ceased in many countries to exercise its primary function, that of educating the people in the science of politics. Still, under the most arbitrary government, the press exerts a mighty influence. It guides and reflects the moral sentiments, the sympathies or antipathies of the people. It stimulates thought, provokes enquiry, and acts as a check even on the most irresponsible rulers, and if ever continental nations are to learn the arts of freedom, it will be chiefly through the agency of an emancipated press.

In democratic America, on the other hand, this institution has also been abused. Its intrinsic value there has been lessened through excessive licence almost as much as on the Continent of Europe, through extreme repression. One can scarcely take up an American paper without coming across pages of rancorous abuse, or turgid declamation. Still, with all its faults, the public press of America is a powerful instrument of good. By holding up the follies of her statesmen to derision, by subjecting vice and corruption to the lash of public opinion, it powerfully promotes the cause of justice and morality, and we have little doubt that as the great republic grows in maturity and wisdom, the blemishes that deform its newspaper press will disappear, and perhaps at no very distant day it may challenge a comparison with our own. But even after making the fullest allowance for these drawbacks, it cannot be denied that the press has proved an invaluable aid to the cause of social progress, and will in all probability continue to be one of the most effective agencies in promoting the growth of intelligence and refinement.

The spread of knowledge in the present age is also greatly accelerated by the rapid progress of education. The upper classes of society have come at length to recognise the truth, that the cause of order and the public good are best promoted by enlightening and elevating the masses. That jealousy with which

* In 1859.

the spread of knowledge among the lower classes was once regarded, is fast vanishing, and if the feelings still linger in the breasts of any, they are seldom bold enough to avow it. Not only in this country but throughout most of Europe, society is earnestly engaged in the task of educating the people, and the rapid progress making in that direction must be deeply gratifying to every philanthropic mind. One of the greatest dangers to which civilization has been ever exposed, has sprung from the existence of a deep stratum of ignorance at the basis of the social fabric.

In that stratum have always germinated the seeds of anarchy and civil dissension. The most terrible convulsions that have shaken the framework of society, have proceeded from the upheaving of that untaught mass. The ignorance of the lower classes has in all ages and countries been one of the greatest obstructions to the progress of civil liberty, social reform and material prosperity, and we deem it one of the most hopeful symptoms of the present age, that such vigorous efforts are being made to reclaim the million from the dominion of ignorance. We know that some look with no friendly eye upon the progress of this movement, they tremble lest the lower classes feeling that knowledge is power, should stretch forth their hand and invade the rights of their superiors. They conjure up visions of triumphant socialism, communist equality, the division of property and all their attendant horrors. But surely such men forget that these theories can only become practicable, when sovereign power is allied to gross ignorance. So utterly opposed are they to the true interest of society, so incapable of rational defence, that the spread of intelligence among the lower classes, would be the surest means of dealing them a death-blow. We believe that no policy is more truly conservative than that which promotes the education of the people; it takes the best security which the nation can give for the preservation of whatever is sacred and venerable in its institutions.

But other and well-meaning men are alarmed lest the masses,

if all highly educated and refined, should feel dissatisfied with their position in the social scale; should scorn manual toil as ignoble drudgery, and all aspire to that social position which of necessity can only belong to a few. To these we would reply, that Providence has not so badly constituted this world, as to make the improvement of each member of society incompatible with the welfare of the whole. He has devised a system, whereby each individual has a proper place and function assigned him, if he will but recognise it. The wide diffusion of intelligence may indeed stimulate ambition, and teach multitudes to aspire to what once was esteemed the birthright of a few, but no harm can accrue to social order from this generous emulation. The intelligence which fires their ambition also inculcates self-restraint, and teaches those who fail to win the prize, to submit to their lot without repining.

We cannot conceive how the spread of education among the lower classes can be viewed, otherwise than with unmingled satisfaction. It assures stability to the institutions of a nation, gives the best practical direction to its energies, and erects the strongest barrier against social convulsions.

On these grounds we believe we are justified in regarding the spread of intelligence, as deeply rooted in our modern system of civilization, and possessing every condition of growth and durability. The growth of popular education on the one hand, and the wholesome influence of the public press on the other, are the two great agencies to which we look for the diffusion of this intelligence, and there seems every reason to hope, from their future career, for a still mightier impulse to the cause of civilization, than they have hitherto rendered.

But, thirdly, we conceive that modern civilization possesses a great element of vitality in the *extensive development of industrial activity*. It presents in this respect a very marked contrast to the system of antiquity, more striking perhaps to a cursory eye than its superiority either in morality or intelligence. We have

already defined one of the elements of civilization, to consist in material prosperity, and we believe that the industrial development of modern times is such as to guarantee to a moral certainty, the steady progress of our race in whatever conduces to their physical well-being. It is possible that some may be sceptical about the religious or even the intellectual progress of mankind, but none, we think, can doubt that in the command of material comforts, each age will show a decided advance upon its predecessor.

We do not, however, regard the industrial phase of modern civilization as only applicable to material progress; it affects in many other ways the welfare of society as we have already had occasion to remark. Indirectly it exerts a powerful moral influence and largely contributes to the advancement of many of the higher interests of mankind. A glance at modern history will show that industrial development has usually been co-ordinate with the progress of every other branch of civilization.

Those nations that have displayed the most assiduous industry and have been most successful in acquiring material wealth, have likewise been most distinguished for social contentment, morality and intelligence. It is true, that to some extent the development of industry is a consequence of morality and intelligence, and in that light it may be considered as an effect, rather than as a cause of social progress. Still, it is not so closely associated with these forces as to be unworthy of separate consideration. It constitutes a distinct aspect of civilization, and is governed by so many special laws as clearly to require a separate examination.

Now, we conceive that the industrial activity of modern times in its latest and grandest development, that of commercial enterprise, is rapidly accomplishing a great social revolution in the world. It is bringing into closer bonds of amity and brotherhood, the members of the great commonwealth of nations, —it is daily rendering them more dependent on each other, and

multiplying the ties that cement their good-will and affection. It is establishing a greater identity in their material interests, a greater harmony in their moral and religious sentiments. Commercial intercourse has been pronounced emphatically to be the great civilizer, and in so far as material agencies can accomplish that end, we fully admit its claims to the title. The great aim of commerce is to augment the sum of material good, and this it effects by bringing into the general market of the world, the special productions of each country and clime, and thus throwing open to the whole human family the aggregate comforts that nature has bestowed on them.

This system of universal exchange forms the basis of an alliance that comprehends the entire family of nations. It establishes a common point of contact between all the divisions of the human race, between the most intelligent and the most ignorant, the most refined and the most barbarous. It thus constitutes the most widely diffused agency for the propagation of knowledge; for though the primary end of commerce is the exchange of articles of material utility, it necessarily leads to the circulation of mental products as well.

In this respect commercial intercourse has been the most effective pioneer of civilization among barbarous tribes. It has brought them largely into contact with the intelligence of superior races, and has taught them to imitate their arts and customs. It seems destined to be the primary means of opening up the East to the entrance of European civilization. India is already tasting the blessings of an active and profitable commerce. Her resources are being fast developed and the industry of her people stimulated.

If the myriads of China are ever to be awakened from their lethargy, it will be in a large measure through the same agency. Commerce will open the door, and all its accompanying blessings will enter in. We view the development of commerce as one of the best guarantees for the social progress of mankind. We believe

it is destined to play a most conspicuous part in future history, and acquire an importance far exceeding what it has yet possessed. And we believe too that as the principles of political economy come to be more generally understood, its influence will also become more purely beneficial. In former times the commercial relations of nations were productive of endless strife, for they were conducted upon the false assumption that there was a necessary antagonism between their interests; but it is now established beyond doubt that there is no contrariety whatever between the commercial interests of nations; but in reality the most perfect harmony. That root of bitterness which has poisoned so long the streams of international intercourse, is now proved to have been an empty phantom. England has led the way in inaugurating this new era. In adopting the policy of Free Trade she has set a bright example to the rest of the world, and though as yet she has made but few converts to her creed, we are fully satisfied that it is only a question of time till Free Trade will be the avowed policy of every civilized country. It is hardly necessary to point out that such a result would give a prodigious impulse to international trade, and would multiply indefinitely all those ameliorative influences which flow from the intercourse of nations.

It seems to us that in the spread of commercial relations will be found the best safeguard against the horrors of war. If ever that barbarous practice falls into disuse, it will probably be through that fusion of rival interests which commerce brings about. When the commercial relations of two countries become so intimate that their interests are bound up in the prosperity of each other, they will hardly rush into hostilities on frivolous pretexts. War in such a case would be suicidal, for every blow struck, would recoil on the head of the aggressor.

We believe it is not extravagant to assume, that in the course of time the commercial dealings of nations will acquire a magnitude equal to their existing domestic trade, that there will

be the same identification of national interests that now exists between the provinces of the same empire, and in a moral point of view the result must be to bring about a general harmony in the opinions and customs of mankind, to give as homogeneous a character to the whole human family as now exists among the inhabitants of the same state. We may expect that commerce will thus afford a highway for diffusing the principles of civil and religious liberty, and for imparting to less fortunate races a knowledge and a taste for those political institutions which have so largely benefitted ourselves.

Commerce is an agency most intimately allied to the principles of freedom and intelligence, and to its future development we look in a great measure for the political enfranchisement of those nations that are now groaning under the yoke of despotism.

But though we consider commercial intercourse the most striking manifestation of the industrial principle in modern times, it is not the only means whereby it promotes the welfare of society. It acts as an admirable moral discipline to individuals, and knits together in a friendly compact the various classes in a state.

In treating of the downfall of ancient civilization, we showed how the want of industrial activity relaxed the bonds of social union, and enfeebled the character of the citizens, and we need not repeat what we then advanced about the beneficial effects of habitual industry upon private character, and thus indirectly upon the political welfare of a nation. Suffice it to say that the growth of industry promotes the cause of civilization quite as much by its wholesome influence on individual character as by cementing the bonds that unite the family of nations.

But, fourthly, we look upon *the growth of physical science* as an important element of vitality in modern civilization. It is closely allied to the industrial element, which we have just examined; it tends, along with it, to augment the physical welfare

of mankind and indirectly to blend their interests and sympathies. Physical Science, in its practical applications, may be almost regarded as the offspring of the last century, and ever since its birth its ratio of progress seems to be increasing. Inventions are crowding upon each other with such rapidity that the material conditions of one generation are altogether changed in the next, The application of steam to manufacturing industry, to railroads, and steamboats, and the invention of the telegraph have altered the external aspect of the world. Man is daily unlocking the secrets of nature and impressing her powers more largely into his service, and thus steadily raising the standard of material comfort. This process must be so obvious to every one that we need not further enlarge on it, but proceed to the fifth and last point on which we feel disposed to rest our views regarding modern progress, we refer *to the extension of the principles of civil and religious liberty*, in other words, the application of political science to the social improvement of mankind. To English readers it need hardly be necessary to observe that free institutions are among the greatest blessings that a nation can possess. They impart vigour, energy, and healthy activity to the body politic. They educate the citizens to the discharge of a high and responsible trust, and endow them with those habits of fore-thought and sagacity which are the natural products of political activity. They inspire each member of the community with a feeling of manly independence, for he feels, however humble be his rank, that his rights are guarded with jealous care, and that before the law he has no superior. There is no surer means of raising a people than to inspire them with a sense of self-respect, and the great advantage of a wise political system is, that it makes a whole nation the depositary of its highest trusts, and thus constitutes each citizen a guardian of the public weal.

Now we believe that the rapid progress of the Anglo-Saxon race is daily establishing on a broader basis the principles of civil and religious liberty, and exciting among other sections

of mankind a desire for those political institutions, which in their case have proved so vast a boon.

It is true that at the present moment the political horizon of Europe is overshadowed by clouds, and the prospects of freedom are enveloped in gloom, but we trust and believe that a brighter day will speedily dawn; we cannot conceive how physical force can for ever lord it over the nobler principles of our nature. While knowledge is making such rapid strides, and intelligence spreading among all ranks of men, the time must come when the mind of a nation will assert its supremacy and refuse any longer to be coerced by brute force. The whole tendency of modern progress forbids the notion that arbitrary power will succeed much longer in crushing the political rights of nations. It would be wrong, however, to suppose that even in the present day the progress of liberty on the Continent is wholly arrested. The influence of public opinion is making itself felt in the councils of the most arbitrary despots. It is imposing a restraint upon the exercise of their power, where no constitutional check exists.

In France, in Austria, and even in Russia, it is felt that the power of the government is practically limited. Even the ruler of half-a-million of bayonets must beware lest he outrage the enlightened opinion of the world. The forms of despotism may indeed be as rigid as they were half-a-century ago, but it cannot be doubted that their power has been largely curtailed. With the numberless channels that now exist for expressing opinion, it is scarcely possible to perpetrate those deeds of darkness which a former generation would have tolerated.

It may be true, and we suspect it is true, that the political organization of the continent has not much improved since the beginning of the century, but we are satisfied that the liberties of the people repose now on a much surer foundation, and just as their rights become virtually acknowledged, will the time draw nigh when outwardly and visibly they will receive their full recognition, and free institutions will crown the edifice. We

believe, then, we are justified in viewing the political aspect of modern times as favourable, on the whole, to the progress of civilization. It promises a steady growth to the principles of civil and religious liberty, and a gradual extension of institutions best calculated to promote the development of nations.

We have now enumerated the leading considerations that inspire us with confidence in the durability of modern civilization. It would not be difficult to suggest other grounds for arriving at the same conclusion, but our limits forbid us to enter into further details, and we suspect, moreover, that most of these reasons would, if closely analysed, be found to resolve themselves into some of the principles we have already enunciated. But however incomplete our theory may be, we think sufficient has been advanced to warrant a sanguine hope, not merely in the maintenance of the present stage of civilization, but in its steady onward progress.

If it be true what we have asserted, that the purifying influence of Christianity is gradually raising the moral standard of mankind, and infusing juster principles into their social relations, then, undoubtedly, the best and noblest interests of humanity are protected against any great reverse, and if the moral development of mankind can be confidently predicted, we cannot hesitate to believe in the progress of the secondary elements of civilization.

Countless agencies are at work for combating ignorance, and enlarging the empire of knowledge. Education, the press, and numerous other appliances, are spreading intelligence through all ranks of society, and thus strengthening the bonds which cement the social fabric, while, on the other hand, industrial enterprise is spreading a great net-work of commerce around the globe, which is interweaving in its folds the rival interests of the human race, and establishing a substantial solidarity among them.

But though we have confidence in the onward progress of civi-

lization, we admit that it is liable to local reactions and temporary relapses. The stream of progress may, in some future time, carve out for itself new channels, and forsake the courses in which it is now flowing; it is possible that the most favoured nations now, may, through fortuitous circumstances, fall behind in the march, and surrender the palm to younger rivals; the tide may flow in another direction, but its current will be equally strong, and its ultimate progress equally certain. There may even be times when the heavens appear everywhere overcast, and the progress of mankind seems on all sides to be arrested, but we are convinced that these seasons will not prove enduring, and that the great cause of civilization will sustain no serious reverse.

We would liken it to the course of a mighty river, in which local obstructions give rise to frequent eddies and back currents, and whose progress to the ocean is delayed by endless tortuosities and deflexions. But its waters nevertheless surmount every obstacle, and accomplish their appointed journey at last.

*April* 1859.

# AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS.*

THE ground on which I venture to offer some remarks on American Institutions is the practical knowledge I had the means of acquiring during a recent tour through North America. Sharing in that lively interest which our countrymen feel in the progress and welfare of our transatlantic progeny, I made it my business, during five months' sojourn in that country, to inform myself, as fully as I could, of the social and political state of the American people. I need not state, that in so brief a period, it is impossible for any foreigner to get an adequate conception of all the phases of national life which America presents; or to enter fully into the spirit and characteristics of the people, differing, as they do, in a thousand forms, from any phase of society which exists in Europe, and possessing no counterpart in any race, or in any age of the world's history. The utmost I could attain was some acquaintance with the prominent features

* The above essay was penned in the year 1860, some months before the outbreak of civil war in America, and while the movement for Secession was just beginning in the Southern States. The political state of the Union had reached its darkest, and the excessive corruptness of public life foreboded a terrible explosion. This may explain the gloomy picture here drawn of American institutions, and its great contrast with the view presented six years afterwards, when the thunder-cloud had burst.

Subsequent reflection, however, compels the admission, that too much importance was attached to external maladies, and too little to the recuperative agencies of the great commonwealth. The final conclusions on the fate of democracy, the writer dissents from now, and they are only interesting as reflecting the tone of thought prevalent at that time among our countrymen who had travelled in the United States.

in the national life of America, and with those broad lines of distinction which separate it from the polity of the mother country, and render it unique among the nations of the world. And while I feel bound to admit that my induction was too narrow to justify hasty or dogmatic conclusions, I make bold to claim the merit of having diligently sought after the truth, and freely opened my mind to the reception of evidence on all sides of the question.

It has been too much the fashion for English writers to describe everything American in the language of hyperbole; either to indulge in the most extravagant praise, or to launch out into terms of unmeasured abuse. A Cobden crosses the Atlantic to find a Utopia, where Astrea has revisited the earth and the golden age has returned; where peace and plenty smile upon the land, and justice holds her equal scales; where the people, released from the grasp of a rapacious oligarchy, and blessed with the full fruition of direct taxation, have created for themselves a political Elysium. A Dickens or a Trollope finds among our cousins nothing but what is food for ridicule or satire; their manners are boorish, their presumption intolerable, their ignorance contemptible. My Lord Fitz-doodle, or some noble champion of prescription and privilege, visits that country to gather arguments against democratic institutions, and they find there the wildest anarchy and the most shameful misrule; the very framework of society is shaken, and the republic is trembling on the brink of destruction. My object will be to steer a middle course between the intemperate opinions advanced on both sides; and not hesitate to praise what is obviously commendable, nor refrain from denouncing those abuses which intelligent citizens of that country are themselves the first to deplore.

The interest of Englishmen naturally centres in the political institutions of the United States. They form a mine from which an exhaustless store of wisdom may be drawn, for the guidance

of this and all other civilized nations; and in this point of view it is not easy to overrate their importance.

In the United States has been wrought out, on a colossal scale, for the first time in the history of the world, the experiment of a pure democracy, and that under the most favourable circumstances possible. A people there suddenly sprang into existence, endowed with all the attributes of maturity. When the Anglo-Saxon race settled in America, it brought with it the highest order of civilization which then existed. The progenitors of the American people carried from their English homes the justest principles of political science, and the strongest convictions of religious duty. They found in the New World the amplest scope for the development of these principles. They started in their career of national progress with the heritage of centuries of civilization; and they were free to apply that knowledge, untrammelled by the shackles of prescription that in old societies retard the march of improvement. Under this auspicious commencement the growth of the Anglo-American people was rapid, beyond precedent, in all the appliances of civilization, and in all the elements of national prosperity; and with this progress the principles of democracy grew and flourished, and became interwoven with the manners, opinions, and institutions of the people: and when the successful vindication of their independence gave a distinct national character to the American people, they were enabled to embody in a solemn instrument those democratic principles, which had taken deep root among them long before the colonial tie with the mother country was broken. The constitution of the United States was framed by one of the wisest and most patriotic assemblies that ever met. It was based upon the loftiest conception of the rights, the privileges, and the capabilities of man; and it was carried into effect among the most intelligent and prosperous community that then existed in the world. If ever there was a field in which democratic principles could be applied

successfully, that field was the United States of America; and therefore it is not to be wondered at if Englishmen should watch with intense interest the progress of this grand experiment, and try to discover whether maxims of political wisdom can be learned from the polity of that great and kindred people. It is but natural for them to conclude that, if these democratic institutions have insured happiness and prosperity to their descendants, they are worthy of imitation at home. But if they find that they are allied with great social abuses, that they interrupt the harmony and deprave the morals of the people, then they are justified in concluding that they are essentially false and unsound; and that if, with every element in their favour, they produce such injurious results, they would be tenfold more pernicious when applied to a community so ill prepared to receive them as our own.

Now, it is undeniable that no thoughtful foreigner can travel through the United States without being struck at the extraordinary unanimity with which intelligent Americans, in all parts of the Union, inveigh against the abuses of their political system. They bitterly complain that, under the present operation of that system, the educated and intelligent classes are virtually excluded from all share in the government; that political power is lodged chiefly in the hands of the ignorant masses; and that the exercise of these powers is delegated by them to a set of adventurers destitute of principle, and only intent on self-aggrandisement. They denounce, in the most vehement language, the shameless bribery and corruption that prevail in every seat of Government, and among public officials of all ranks, and the flagitious manner in which the claims of justice are slighted, and the public good sacrificed, to indulge party spite and promote private interests; and they are scarcely less unanimous in ascribing these evils to the excessive extent to which democratic principles have been carried in America.

This may appear strong language; and yet I believe it fails

to convey an adequate idea of the grief and indignation with which true patriots, all through the Union, view the gross abuses of their political system.

For my own part, I can testify that I scarcely met a single intelligent American—and I conversed on this subject with hundreds—who did not deplore the profligate manner in which the administrative functions of the community were discharged; and the great majority of them admitted, without hesitation, the immense superiority of that system under which we are privileged to live.

No one, who is not wilfully blind, can mix in American society, or become familiar with the press or periodical literature of the country, without being painfully impressed with the contemptible character of the men to whom the administration of public affairs is entrusted. The very atmosphere of public life in America seems to have become tainted; for few can breathe it, and keep their honour intact. One can hardly take up an American newspaper without finding the foulest charges preferred against leading public functionaries. In fact, the whole tone of the press goes to prove that patriotism and public office are wide as the poles asunder; and it seems to be tacitly assumed by every one that private interest and personal aggrandisement are the only motives that actuate their public men. I believe it would be hard to point out half a dozen leading politicians in the United States whose public career has been irreproachable, and whose integrity is beyond question. So deeply has the canker of corruption eaten into the vitals of the State, that even the chief magistrates of the Republic have not been exempt from suspicion; and during my stay in Washington, the scandalous spectacle was exhibited of a committee of the Legislature investigating the gravest charges of bribery, brought against the then existing President (Buchanan): and I may add, that nothing was more common than to hear the grossest imputations thrown out against former

Presidents, and practices attributed to them which to English ears would sound scarcely credible.

Looking over the broad field of political life in America, the grand object of all parties seems to be the plunder of the public. It is one of the greatest defects of the Federal Constitution that, with every change of government, the whole of the Federal employés, from the secretaries of state to the humblest letter-carrier, are removed, and replaced by another set wholly unaccustomed to their duties. The enormous quantity of patronage thus lodged with the Central Government is one of the chief causes of corruption; for the possession of political power by any party brings with it an immense amount of pecuniary advantage. Indeed, it is perfectly notorious, and scarcely disguised by politicians themselves, that the violent agitation which disturbs the Union, prior to each presidential election, is little more than a scramble for the spoils of office; and that all the protestations then made of patriotism and public principle are so much idle breath. It is perfectly well known to every one conversant with American politics that vast party organisations exist in that country, in which the leaders and active agents have all a distinct understanding that, on the accession of their party to power, a certain specified share in the public spoils will be allotted to them. By these organised parties vast sums of money are disbursed, to hire the support of leading journals, and pay for the services of stump orators and electioneering agents; while the most unprincipled devices are employed to catch the votes of the public.

A stranger suddenly precipitated into the United States, without preparation, might imagine that society was on the verge of dissolution; for he will hear on all sides the most inflammatory appeals to the worst passions of the people, and will daily listen to the wildest and most astounding predictions. Take up any Southern newspaper, and read the speeches of any Southern agitator during the past summer; and you will probably hear

that the Republican party in the North are preparing, if they succeed in electing the President, to invade the South and abolish Slavery; and you will be told that nothing but a dissolution of the Union can save the independence of the South, and that dissolution is inevitable. Take up some Abolition newspaper of Massachusetts, and you will be told that President Buchanan is secretly encouraging the slave trade; that he was in collusion with Walker, and intended to annex Nicaragua and Cuba. You will be told that, if the pro-Slavery party contrive to retain the Government, they intend to absorb Mexico, and parcel it out into slave states, and legalise the African slave trade; and perhaps some, bolder than the rest, will assert that they intend ultimately to reimpose slavery, by force, on the free States of the North. Many of the statements which circulate through the press, and are paraded at public meetings, are so monstrous, that they could hardly be told with gravity to an English audience; and a stranger, for some time after his arrival in America, is puzzled to decide whether some fearful catastrophe is impending, or whether the Americans are playing at some outrageous game of falsehood and mutual deception. But he cannot fail to be struck, before long, with the passive attitude of the public, amid this wild clamour and excitement; and he will discover at last that all this thunder and tempest is but moonshine, and that it is an engine of party politics habitually employed to practise on the fears and passions of the multitude. Such an utter want of principle pervades political life in America, such a constant film of falsehood and deception obscures every public question, that it requires long experience and the utmost circumspection to ascertain the true merits of any case; and that severe condemnation which we must pronounce upon the motives and characters of individual politicians, in America, must be extended with equal rigour to their whole system of party organisation, and the machinery by which the ends of those parties are carried out.

But this utter want of principle is not confined, as is sometimes imagined in this country, to the Federal Legislature and the great questions of national policy; it extends with equal virulence to the State legislatures and local governments. And here I may take occasion to observe, that in this country sufficient importance is scarcely attached to these local governments. Englishmen sometimes appear to forget that the United States is a confederacy of thirty-three independent republics, each possessing a legislature and executive of its own, with exclusive control over its domestic affairs. Indeed, the functions of Congress are comparatively unimportant, when compared with the powers entrusted to the governments of the separate States; and the interests and feelings of the citizens are much more deeply involved in the legislation of their own State, than in that of the central body. If, therefore, it were true that political profligacy was confined to the federal councils, and that duplicity and fraud were only resorted to in connection with federal questions, the vital interests of the people might escape, and the injury be easily repaired. But, unhappily, the same malaria which infects the air at Washington, breathes its poisonous influence into every state legislature, and in many of them assumes a more malignant form, and produces more revolting effects, than in the federal capital. In many of these States, enormous sums of money are disbursed by the Government, and public works, in the shape of roads, bridges, canals, &c., either undertaken or subsidised to an immense extent—and thus vast pecuniary interests are placed at the disposal of the Legislature; and it is perfectly notorious that in many of the States—I believe I may say in most of them—the grossest bribery is practised among the members. In fact, a wholesale system of peculation and jobbery prevails, in which the depositaries of political power sell their influence to the highest bidder. In connection with these legislatures a species of business has sprung up, called "lobbying;" in which a class of persons, styled the "lobbyers," undertake, for a certain considera-

tion, to get private bills passed through the House. In some of the States, I have been informed on the best authority, that it is vain to attempt to get any private measure passed, however unobjectionable, without paying black mail to these harpies; and to prove that these infamous practises are not confined to exceptional cases, or exist chiefly in outlying or half-civilized districts, I may observe that the old, populous, and wealthy States of New York and New Jersey are the most notorious for this political profligacy. Had I thought it worth my while, I might have brought folios of evidence from the press of New York, in proof of the infamous character of the Legislature which sits at Albany. By the unanimous consent of all right-thinking men, it stands convicted of being a perfect hot-bed of corruption.

But why, it will be asked, do the public tolerate this infamy? Why do they suffer themselves to be monstrously overtaxed, to enrich contractors, afford enormous *douceurs* to political agents, and allow room for the peculation of public functionaries? To which it may be replied, that these political parties are so thoroughly organized, and retain in their pay such a crowd of secret agents, and bring to bear such an all-pervading mass of influence on the electors, that the isolated efforts of a few disinterested citizens seldom prove effectual. Occasionally it does happen that, through a spasmodic effort of the community, the Augean stable is cleansed; but in the vast majority of cases the task is so difficult and thankless, that it is abandoned in despair, and the richer and more cultivated citizens purchase immunity from the tumult of public life by submitting to a certain amount of extortion. It may be added, too, that in many of the States it is highly dangerous for any citizen, however worthy and esteemed, to attempt to reform these abuses. In some of them, his life would scarcely be safe; and in all of them, he would be sure of incurring such a torrent of obloquy from the organs of the party he attacked, as would effectually disgust him with the task, and probably leave his

character, however spotless, obscured by a cloud of unmerited reproach.

But, just as the Federal Government yields to the State Legislatures in corruption, so do the latter yield to many of the municipal governments. If Albany surpasses Washington in venality, so does the city of New York outvie Albany. I believe it is not possible to find in Europe any parallel to the municipal government of the commercial metropolis of America. Perhaps in the England of George III. some rotten borough might be found, where the city authorities trafficked as habitually in the disposal of their patronage as does the illustrious corporation of New York. But the antiquary will search in vain for any such combination of unbridled corruption with utter effrontery, and such gross ignorance with such boundless presumption.

The government of New York has long been controlled by the very refuse of the populace. In fact, for some years past the power has virtually been lodged in the hands of the Irish immigrants, of whom the most ignorant and worthless class congregate there; and the nominees of these people, who sit at the council board, are fit representatives of their honourable constituents. Often destitute of the simplest rudiments of education, unable to read or write correctly, this travesty on popular government meets in the council chamber to quarrel and fight about the disposal of the plunder, and squanders the princely revenues of New York in the perpetration of jobs, compared with which the peculations of a Verres or a Clive might appear innocent.

It is calculated that nearly one-half of the enormous expenditure of the city of New York finds its way into the pockets of the municipal authorities and their protegès; while the miserable sewerage, paving, and lighting of the streets attest their indifference to the public good. The very safety of the citizens is compromised by this wretched system; for the police

are in many cases drawn from the lowest rabble, and receive the office as a reward for bullying, shoulder-hitting, and other electioneering services, designated by slang that would be equally offensive and unintelligible to British ears.

So thoroughly ashamed are the respectable citizens of New York of their disreputable government, that they use every effort to keep them out of contact with any illustrious stranger; and it will have been observed that, during the recent visit of the Prince of Wales to that city, private committees of the citizens were formed, to arrange the ceremonial of reception and contrive to exclude the civic authorities from any share in the programme; and, so far as I am aware, beyond a presentation to the Mayor, the Prince was ingeniously protected from the offensive civilities of the city officers.

Again, the question will be asked, Why do the respectable citizens tolerate this infamous system? To which I reply, that strenuous attempts have been made to reform it, and lists of the most respected names have been proposed for election; but hitherto the well-organised efforts of these conspirators against the public weal have proved invincible. Quiet citizens are intimidated by threats of violence; and those who become obnoxious, by their determined opposition, run no small risk of being way-laid, abused, or even murdered. On the election day, the polling-booths are besieged by the mob, who scrutinise the votes, and often maltreat the supporters of unpopular candidates; while fictitious votes are registered in enormous numbers, through the concurrence of the returning officers, or the reckless perjury of the rabble. It has thus come to pass that the peaceable and orderly inhabitants of New York have abandoned all share in the government of the city, and are content to submit to extortion and misrule, so long as they are not oppressed absolutely beyond endurance.

It is scarcely fair, however, to take New York as a specimen of municipal rule, because it now is notoriously the worst governed city in the Northern States; though, till within the

last few years, Baltimore aspired, with some prospects of success, to rival it in that bad pre-eminence. The evils of popular government seem to grow with the scale on which it is exercised; for, just as the cities are large, so does the mal-administration increase, while in the small towns of the North comparatively few complaints are heard; and I believe in the little townships of New England, the local administration is conducted with admirable spirit, honesty, and success.

In the large cities of the South, however, we find the same abuses rampant that disgrace the Northern capitals; and pre-eminent in infamy stands the great commercial emporium of New Orleans. During two months' residence in that city I became tolerably conversant with its internal economy; and I have no hesitation in saying that it would be difficult to find, within the limits of Christendom, any parallel to the utter lawlessness and habitual violation of right and justice which prevail there.

For many years the government of New Orleans has been in the hands of a party originally organised on political grounds, and known by the soubriquet of "Know-nothings;" but for some years past they have ceased to possess a political complexion, and are held together by no tie beyond the common love of plunder. This party is chiefly composed of a class well known in the States by the name of "Rowdies;" that is to say, men without reputable means of livelihood, and supposed to be equally at home in the gambling saloon or the political caucus, and whose arguments are enforced by a ready appeal to the bowie-knife or revolver. Out of this class filibustering expeditions are recruited, slavers furnished with crews, and parties organised to kidnap free negroes and sell them into slavery, beyond the limits of federal jurisdiction: and last, but not least, in the list of their services, do this accomplished body condescend to govern the city of New Orleans. By them, either directly or mediately, are appointed the mayor and council, the city magistrates, the police, and all the public officers; and when

such is the character of the constituent body, it is not hard to imagine the qualifications of their deputies. The natural consequence is, that the property of the citizens, though taxed exorbitantly, is miserably protected; and the utter want of stability and confidence that is felt is a chief cause in preventing a city, that might be among the wealthiest in the world, being anything more than a temporary residence of traders, eager to amass a competence, and then escape from this hot-bed of anarchy and crime.

In New Orleans, the police, instead of being guardians of public order, are supposed themselves to be accessory to half the crimes committed; a fact we need not wonder at, when we consider that they are appointed by the city officers, out of that very class of rowdies whose combined action secures their election.

About three years ago, anarchy in New Orleans reached such a pitch, that the respectable citizens could endure it no longer. The city had become a perfect Alsatia, in which law and order were openly set at defiance. Outrageous crimes were committed with impunity, for the magistrates and police connived at the escape of the miscreants; men were repeatedly assassinated in open day, and in crowded thoroughfares; and the perpetrators of the deeds, who were often notorious, scarcely took the pains to conceal themselves. The respectable citizens at last constituted themselves into vigilance committees, seized the armoury, and organised a large military force; while the opposite party entrenched themselves in another part of the town, and at one time a bloody affray seemed imminent. The intention of the citizens was to surround the headquarters of the Rowdies, seize the ringleaders, and lynch them on the spot; but, owing to divided councils, and the natural dislike of some to violate the forms of justice, the scheme was abandoned, and the organisation dissolved, without effecting any radical change. It produced, however, the wholesome effect of frightening the rabble, and the most notorious of the evil-doers thought it prudent to withdraw,

and ply their vocation elsewhere; and since then, public order has been less frequently disturbed. Still, the basis of the government continues the same, and the places of trust are filled by men wholly unworthy of confidence; while nothing but the dread of being called to account by the exasperated citizens causes them to preserve any outward regard for decency.

I feel bound, however, to remark, before quitting this subject, that just as New York surpasses all Northern cities in municipal abuses, so does New Orleans all those of the South, in even a greater degree; and I have dwelt upon its condition at such length more from being possessed of fuller information concerning it, than because I considered it a fair type of southern cities. The inference, however, is unavoidable, that the system which admits of such abuses in the commercial capitals of the North and South, and provides no practicable remedy for them, must be radically unsound; and this is the point to which I am most anxious to call attention.

I cannot, however, devote more space to the examination of public life in America. Sufficient has been advanced to prove that public men, considered as a class—but more especially those who make politics their profession—are painfully deficient in those qualities which command our respect, and most unworthy representatives of that great and intelligent people who are charged with the destinies of the Western Hemisphere.

Whatever conclusions may be drawn about the general working of democratic institutions in America, no Englishman can travel through that country, and not be conscious of a feeling of thankfulness, when he reflects upon the vast superiority of the men that adorn public life in the mother country. Never, perhaps, till then, does he fully appreciate the priceless worth of public virtue. When he dwells upon the spectacle of a rich, powerful, and enlightened people, possessing within itself boundless resources of political capacity and administrative talent, yet pillaged and disgraced by a set of adventurers, bankrupt in character and con-

temptible in ability, he rises for the first time to a just estimation of the dignity, the honour, and the purity of the men to whom are entrusted the destinies of England. At home, amid the dust and the din of party politics, where each political peccadillo is severely scanned by an Argus-eyed press, public opinion is too apt to fasten upon the petty failings of the guardians of the state. It forgets to do justice to that broad platform of patriotism and self-denial upon which, in the main, are grounded the hopes, the toils, and the rewards of politicians in England; and it overlooks the fact that, in the great majority of cases, our public men are either independent of, or wholly indifferent to, the emoluments of office; and that the most questionable motive with which they stand charged is nothing worse than a thirst for honourable distinction. If the public did full justice to these undeniable truths, it would look with a less cynical eye upon the labours of our senators and statesmen. It would encourage them, by expressing a more genial sympathy with their efforts, and pass lightly over those trivial faults from which the best and greatest of men are not exempt.

Were I asked for the best refutation of the charges often brought against the British Parliament, the peevish complaints of disappointed politicians, who are incessantly exclaiming against the insincerity, the factiousness, and the selfish partisanship of our public men, I would point such an one to the capitol at Washington. I would ask him to take a seat in the House of Representatives, and study the manners and deportment of American Legislators. He would then discover that the majesty of the law was nowhere held in such contempt as by the lawgivers themselves. He would see a noisy, turbulent rabble, restrained by no sense of decorum, and forgetful of the common courtesies of life. He would listen to the most violent personal altercations, in which honourable members display gifts that would be the envy of Billingsgate; he would see the authority of the Speaker, and the usages of debate habitually set at nought;

and such a Babel of noise and confusion prevailing, that he would marvel how the press could give an intelligible report of the proceedings. If he descends to minuter inspection, he will be disgusted at the boorish habits of the members; for he will probably see one-half of the assembly lounging on their benches, with legs poised akimbo, and squirting tobacco juice with ceaseless energy; while the other half are standing at once, and the major part of them attempting to address the House together, in defiance of the breathless remonstrances of the Speaker.

But, on larger acquaintance, he will discover that the indecorum that reigns in the Council Chamber is but a symptom of the grosser abuses that are perpetrated outside its walls. He will be astonished to find that in a Christian country, and in this enlightened nineteenth century, the barbarous practice of duelling has been revived; and that among Southern society generally, but especially among politicians, what is falsely called the code of honour is almost universally acknowledged. He will see there, sitting on the democratic benches, men who have literally fought, or rather shot, their way up to political distinction; and whose main qualification for this deliberative assembly is their readiness to answer, by the pistol, those arguments which they cannot refute by reason. He will there find that a system of terrorism is openly employed to silence those men whom a generous sense of duty urges to stem public opinion, or denounce the wiles and subterfuges of faction. He will there see men insulted by ruffians, who are willing to stake their own worthless lives on the chance of ridding their party of such formidable opposition; and if respect for the laws of God and man deter the injured statesman from submitting his quarrel to the bloody arbitrement of the duel, he is liable to be grossly abused and maltreated: and the spectacle is often seen, at Washington, of unpopular members going and returning from the House attended by an armed escort of their friends, and even protected in their hotels by a self-constituted guard.

I may mention for the information of those who may be incredulous of these statements, that, during my stay in Washington, a bloody affray with bowie knives was daily expected to come off, in the streets, between two prominent members of the Legislature. A challenge had passed from one to the other and been accepted, but by some means or other the public authorities had become advised of their intentions, and succeeded, for the time, in keeping them apart. But these chivalrous heroes, to prove their high sense of honour to the public, made it their *confidante* through the medium of the press; and I had the opportunity of reading, in the columns of a leading journal, the entire correspondence between these worthies, and learning what arrangements are needful for the settlement of controversies in this peculiar fashion. I narrate this fact, not so much as evidence of a state of things which is perfectly notorious, as to show the utter effrontery with which public opinion is treated, and the careless defiance of the first principles of law which the legislators themselves exhibit.

I cannot imagine how any intelligent citizen of the Great Republic can walk under the stupendous colonnades of the federal capitol, or traverse the marble halls and splendid chambers of that grand monument of a nation's pride, without the acutest feelings of grief and indignation. How can he reflect, without a pang, upon the indignities that are there done to the presiding genius of this great national temple, and the affronts that are there offered to the sacred cause of free institutions and representative government? And the bitterness of his reflections will be increased when he calls to mind the illustrious character of that assembly which founded the constitution and secured the liberties of his country; for where could a greater contrast be found than between the noble band of patriot statesmen and warriors that clustered round Washington and Franklin, and the selfish unprincipled, and illiterate throng that now usurp the reins of government? History has enshrined in imperishable records the

names of the fathers of the American Republic; they are embalmed in the memory of a mighty nation, and never mentioned without grateful reverence and respect. But what historian will immortalise the obscure party leaders who now strut their brief hour on the political stage? What future generation will revere the memory of those ephemeral politicians, who rise and disappear amid the eddying surges of popular passion? What lustre will be shed upon the cause of liberty by those puny statesmen who now scramble ingloriously for the spoils of office? No! The glory of American statesmanship has departed; its purity, its disinterested patriotism, its lofty principles and noble ends, have all become traditions of the past; and, as often happens in the history of democracies, the infancy of the state produced giants while its maturity gives birth to dwarfs. The Athenian states, men of the times of Pericles, were not more unlike the blustering demagogues in the days of Philip; the Roman Senate in the times of Scipio, to the fawning sycophants who crowned Augustus, than the Congress over which Washington presided, to their degenerate successors in the present day.

At this point the question will naturally be asked, How the American Confederacy continues to enjoy such a degree of prosperity under so wretched a system of administration? To which I would reply, that, so far as Congress is concerned, fortunately the powers vested in the federal government are very limited; and the private rights of the citizens are protected by that great deed of settlement, the Constitution of the United States, whose authority has hitherto been held paramount, and is still revered by the great majority of the people as the Magna Charta of their liberties. By it the functions of the Legislature are strictly defined; and any infringement of its provisions entitles the aggrieved party to redress from the Supreme Court of Justice, whose chief function is to expound the Constitution, and determine the powers it assigns to the various orders in the State. The mischievous influence of politicians is thus comparatively circum-

scribed; and the great body of the public, engrossed in their industrial pursuits, can afford to despise the paltry squabbles of demagogues and place-hunters. It is easy to see, however, that if Congress were intrusted with those extensive powers which political exigency requires that European governments should exercise; if it controlled, like them, immense military forces, and disbursed enormous revenues; and if the gravest interests of the nation hung upon its decision; then the effects upon the national welfare would be ruinous. Under these circumstances, it would not be hard to predict the time when the people, disgusted with their democratic rulers, would seek repose in the arms of despotism.

But, though their fortunate position exempts Americans for the present from this danger, the feeling is rapidly gaining ground in the United States, that their democratic institutions have been a failure; and already, among the intelligent and educated citizens, the conviction is almost unanimous that the principle of popular sovereignty has been pushed to excess. The majority of those with whom I conversed on the subject attributed the abuses of their political system mainly to the action of universal suffrage; and did not hesitate to declare that, if political power was again vested in the hands of the middle class, they would never surrender it to the populace. Though no people are more thoroughly permeated by the love of liberty, and more jealous of the rights and privileges of man, the enlightened classes have long ceased to believe in the essential equality of political rights. They have wholly lost faith in those abstract theories of popular government on which their forefathers acted; and have come to adopt the English standard of expediency, as the safest guide in political science. But if intelligent citizens of America have ceased to feel pride in their political system, they are still more decided in deprecating its adoption in this country. I do not remember meeting with a single individual who advocated the trial of universal suffrage in England; and many with whom I conversed

were most emphatic in expressing their belief that the day which witnessed the adoption of that system in this country would close the era of its national greatness. They argued, and with much apparent reason, that if, in the United States, where the masses are much better educated than with us, where wages are higher, and the demand for labour literally unlimited, and where boundless tracts of virgin soil offer a rich field for the enterprise and energy of the working class, popular sovereignty has yet proved dangerous to the peace and well-being of society, it would be tenfold more pernicious in an old country like this, where all those safety-valves, so to speak, are wanting. In America they contend, even though political power is vested by the populace in most unworthy hands, yet the prerogatives of government are too limited to allow vital injury to be done to the national interests; while the vast industrial resources of the country diffuse a degree of prosperity and contentment among the working classes which prevents them using their political ascendancy to legislate for the detriment of the rich. But in England, they argue, the case is wholly different. The functions of government there are, and must of necessity be, far more important; and the interests of the public are therefore more deeply involved in their right discharge. Its social system, also, is highly artificial. The line of demarcation is drawn more sharply than in America between the propertied and non-propertied classes, between capitalists and labourers; while their interests, apparently at least, repeatedly come into collision. In periods of distress we have thousands, almost millions of work-people partially destitute, and imputing, in their ignorance, all their suffering to defective legislation. What, say they, would be the consequence of placing the preponderance of political power in the hands of this unreasoning and famishing multitude; and leaving at its mercy that gigantic accumulation of wealth which owes its very existence to the confidence felt in the stability of our social fabric?

It seems to me that this reasoning is unanswerable; and that no impartial foreigner can study democracy in America without being profoundly conscious of the dangers with which it is pregnant, and the disastrous consequences that might follow from its hasty adoption in old and populous countries like our own. Neither do its advocates find in America much support to their favourite theory, that popular education will provide against the abuse of popular sovereignty; for there, through the admirable system of common schools, almost every native-born citizen, at least in the Free States, is taught to read and write correctly; and scarcely a workman is to be found who does not take in some newspaper, or provide himself with some literary entertainment. The inference, therefore, is unavoidable, that the duties of a citizen require for their proper discharge more than the bare rudiments of education; they demand an active understanding, and a mind enriched by observation and reflection; and it is obvious that those qualities will seldom be found in the ranks of men whose energy is exclusively absorbed in the struggle for subsistence.

In close connection with the political institutions of a country stand its system of jurisprudence and the administration of its laws, if, indeed, they should not be reckoned as part of its political system. For the sake of distinctness, however, I will consider these apart, premising that no element is more essential to the welfare of a nation than the just administration of righteous laws. I do not think it needful here, neither do I feel competent, to analyse the American system of jurisprudence, believing, as I do, that it is substantially the same as our own. But no review of American institutions can have any claims to completeness which fails to give due prominence to the administration of justice; and in no respect, perhaps, are the shortcomings of the democratic system more painfully obvious than in its defective discharge of this duty.

It will be known to most of my readers that the vast majority

of lawsuits are determined by the tribunals of the separate States; and that only in rare and exceptional cases are appeals made to the Supreme Federal Court at Washington. Practically speaking, the jurisdiction of the States is supreme within their own boundaries; and therefore it is of the last importance that the judges in those States should be fully qualified to discharge the high trust allotted to them. Now, it was originally intended that the appointment of those judges should rest with the executive, and that their fitness for the post should be their sole recommendation; and till a comparatively recent date this wise practice was generally followed. But that levelling tendency which has been busy since the days of Washington in undermining the barriers he erected to restrain the impulses of the populace, has gradually succeeded in destroying this wholesome check, and in the majority of the States the judiciary are now elected by universal suffrage, and for very short periods of time; while, in those that still resist this innovation, the chances of successful opposition are daily becoming fainter. To the careful student of human nature, or even to an observer of ordinary sagacity, it need not be told that under this system judicial independence is a farce. When the magistrate is placed, every two years, in the position of a candidate for election, and feels that his prospects of distinction, and perhaps his livelihood itself, depends upon the success with which he cultivates popularity, it is most unlikely that he will venture upon any action displeasing to his constituents. In point of fact, he ceases to be the impartial expounder of the law, and becomes instead, the capricious exponent of popular will—the advocate, upon the bench, of the whims and passions of the majority. The practical working of this vicious system, in America, is quite consistent with these axiomatic truths, and the popular election of the judiciary is deplored by thoughtful citizens of that country as the most irremediable evil in their system. The abuses consequent upon the defective administration of justice vary, like the

others I have adverted to, in the different sections of the United States; but they are felt in their most aggravated form in the large cities, and, geographically considered, in the Southern States.

In the city of New Orleans, for instance, and in the State of Louisiana, the judges have been in a great measure the nominees of the same unprincipled party that appointed the civic officers, and have in innumerable cases tarnished the honour of the bench by their shameful perversion of justice.

It is doubtful whether the subservience of the English bench to court influence, in the days of the Stuarts, was greater than the miserable pandering to popular prejudice and passion that may now be found in some of the Southern States. The infamous Jeffreys is not without modern imitators, who, in an humbler sphere, are not less versant in the arts of corruption, and not less audacious in perverting the law. All through the Southern States, and to a considerable extent in the Northern, it is perfectly notorious that wealthy and influential criminals are rarely brought to justice. The most outrageous crimes are repeatedly committed with impunity; assassinations are frequent in the open day, and if the perpetrators of the crime are men of wealth or influence, they are seldom or never adequately punished. The main check upon high-handed crime is the dread of public vengeance. When obnoxious criminals escape, through the guilty complicity of judge and jury, it sometimes happens that the exasperated citizens take the law into their own hands, and execute summary justice. Those conversant with the social economy of the Southern States need not be told that such cases are by no means rare.

The systematic abuse of justice, however, is not so much attributable to the undue influence of powerful offenders as to the overpowering weight of popular feeling. In all parts of the Union there are certain classes of subjects on which it is vain to look for equitable judgment, and where the rights of an un-

popular minority are habitually overborne by the voice of the majority. For example: were some Northern orator to mount the tribune, and denounce the institution of slavery in the South, even though he did so in decorous language, and abstained from transgressing any legal statute, it is not unlikely that he would be shamefully abused, and perhaps murdered by the mob; and yet in all probability the guilty parties, even though identified, would escape scatheless, or be subjected to some merely nominal penalty. No Southern jury, in such a case, would find a verdict of murder; nor, even if such a verdict were found, would any judge venture to sanction it, or any magistrate dare to carry it into execution.

In further illustration, I may advert to the practice of duelling, a custom that is generally sanctioned by public opinion in the South. According to the statute-book, it ranks in the same criminal category as in England; and yet you meet daily with men who are known to have blood upon their heads, and whom justice has never ventured to call to account. In fact, the law has practically renounced its function with respect to duelling, and in so doing has opened the door to an amount of violence and bloodshed that has rendered Southern society the reproach of Christianity and civilization. But it is needless to accumulate instances of the disgraceful subserviency of the law to popular prejudice; suffice it to say that justice in America has come to be in a great measure the ever-varying reflection of public feeling. The arbitrary will of the majority overrides the statute-book, biasses the verdict of juries, and uses the authority of the bench to establish its tyranny over the minority.

In this respect, as in many others, democratic America contains within its bosom the elements of a relentless despotism —the despotism, as too often happens, of an ignorant and passionate majority, over an intelligent and conscientious minority. No careful student of American institutions can fail

to be impressed most deeply with the supreme importance of having courts of justice, altogether independent of the influence of faction, and conscious of incurring no danger in the faithful discharge of their duties; and the still greater importance of having the public mind leavened with a sacred regard to justice, and only accustomed to contemplate law as the expression of absolute right and the means of enforcing perfect equity.

I have thus far been obliged in the course of my remarks, to speak most unfavourably of the working of American Institutions, and by implication to draw a contrast as flattering to the political system of England, as it is disparaging to that of the United States. But were I to stop short here, I would be rightly chargeable with drawing a picture of American society at once partial, distorted, and unjust. No intelligent observer of the American people can fail to be struck with the energy, and enterprise which make the people prosper in spite of their wretched government. To the theorist, who only views a people through the medium of its institutions, the American Republic must seem doomed to anarchy and ruin, but to the practical observer of men and things around him a very different impression is conveyed; for he feels the pulsation of a national life more active and buoyant than exists in any other civilised community; he sees on all sides of him a superabundant energy, that is carrying the nation forward in a career of material prosperity unparalleled in history; and he naturally takes a sanguine view of the destinies of a people, that seems to him to possess so many elements of social progress.

Were the foregoing remarks applicable to any old European community—even to our own, where the principles of freedom have taken deepest root—the inference would be unavoidable, that society was in the throes of dissolution. No degree of civilization, of social order and private happiness, could co-exist in Europe with such political abuses as are found in America; and therefore it happens that Europeans, who only study the

institutions of that country, do injustice to the character and real greatness of the people, while those who are only brought into contact with their private enterprise and success disbelieve in the alleged abuses of their political system. To reconcile these conflicting estimates, and to convey a more just and comprehensive view of the real situation of the American people, I feel bound to advert for a little to their social and industrial economy, and thus indicate how the people can flourish, when their government, in all its branches, is so vicious.

The most striking feature in the social life of America is the extraordinary industrial energy of the people. Even as compared with the mother country, which has long been styled with propriety the "workshop of the world," America is distinguished for the energetic and successful pursuit of wealth and physical comfort. That faculty of labour in which the English people excels all Continental nations, is allied in our descendants to a fervid energy, and restless ambition that produce astounding results. The grand, all-pervading object of ambition in America is the acquisition of wealth; in that channel are exercised the strongest and most vigorous intellects; and those talents, which in this country, and still more on the Continent, would be divided between the rival professions of politics, literature, science, and trade, are there concentrated on the latter pursuit.

To estimate the full effect of this national peculiarity, we must also take into account the inexhaustible resources of the country. Within the territory of the Union might be located with ease a population greater than that of Europe, and therefore agriculture selects only the choicest soils for its operation, and obtains a recompense vastly greater than rewards it in the Old World. The semi-tropical regions in the South, in addition to an exuberant supply of most articles of food, have a practical monopoly of the most productive article of trade in modern times, and through the institution of slavery, however injurious it may be in other points of view, accumulate a vast amount of wealth.

The manufacturing industry and commerce of the country, based upon these immense natural resources, is equally lucrative, and affords a much richer recompense for mercantile genius than exists in any other known community. It thus happens that the passion for material advancement, which distinguishes the American people, finds boundless scope for its exercise; neither does it engender, as it might do, within the narrow confines and overcrowded professions of old countries feelings of class animosity.

The Americans, moreover, have the great advantage of entering upon their magnificent heritage free from those heavy burdens which hang like a millstone round the necks of most European nations. They have no penalty to pay for the ambition, the extravagance, or the misfortunes of their forefathers; they have inherited an estate clear of mortgage, and exempt from hereditary burdens.

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that the energetic industry of the Americans should have diffused among the citizens a degree of affluence which has not been equalled in any other community. We there find, for the first time in the history of the world, that poverty and destitution are almost unknown, or if they exist at all, that they are clearly traceable to the indolence or folly of the sufferer. The class which lives by manual labour enjoys there a degree of physical comfort experienced nowhere else. The common labourer is recompensed as well as the skilled mechanic was in this country twenty years ago; and the industrious artisan there can surround himself with as many physical comforts as the majority of the middle classes on the continent at the present day. It is in this fact mainly that we must seek for an explanation of the apparent anomaly, that the country flourishes under administrative abuses of so gross a character. The great mass of the people are too busy and contented to listen to revolutionary projects. No hopeless mass of ignorance and destitution underlies the social fabric on which sedition may take

hold. Demagogues exist in abundance, who would willingly rise to eminence on the ruins of their country, and no authority is strong enough to check their mischievous designs; but society itself opposes a *vis inertiæ* of satisfied contentment, against which their machinations are spent in vain. To this wide diffusion of material prosperity must be added its natural accompaniment—the prevalence of elementary education and practical intelligence among the working classes. In that respect these far surpass the lower strata of society, in this or any European country; and though this intelligence is far too narrow to justify them in assuming, as they do in America, predominance of political power, it is sufficient to guard them against the delusive theories of social right which germinate so quickly across the channel. Neither communism nor socialism find many disciples in America; for even the poorest citizen is conscious that, if he is true to himself, society will not refuse him an asylum.

But while we are justified in regarding the industrial energy of the American people as one of the chief safety-valves in the body politic, and the main security against democratic license, we must not blind ourselves to its injurious influence on other departments of the national life. We there see material prosperity exalted to the chief rank in a nation's esteem, and adopted as the great standard by which all the other interests of society are measured. No great nation has ever addicted itself so universally to the worship of mammon, or has treated with profounder contempt the pursuit of purely abstract knowledge. This ruling passion of the people appears in every phase of their character; it confronts you at every turn in private life; it gives inspiration to the public press; it permeates the literature of the country; it underlies all the great political movements.

The stranger landing at New York is immediately struck with the feverish excitement in which the commercial community is plunged. An insatiate ambition to be rich pervades all classes of society; and social estimation rises exactly in proportion to

the degree in which that ambition is realised. In this intense struggle to acquire wealth and a false social distinction, the boundaries of honour, generosity, and truth are repeatedly overstepped, and practices are tolerated, and even approved, that in most Christian communities would be stamped with reprobation. In all the great emporiums of trade in America the same mercenary spirit is evinced; in all of them the pursuit of gain dwarfs the nobler faculties of the soul; it even encroaches on the sanctity of domestic life, and blunts the sense of moral responsibility. Passing out of the great marts of commerce, we find the same restless ambition diffused throughout the rural districts. You find the settler in Ohio, who has with immense labour reclaimed his farm from the wilderness, and built for his family a comfortable home, deserting on a sudden impulse the scene of his domestic joys, and piercing into the wilds of Minnesota or Kansas. He leaves without compunction the associations of friendship, the pleasures of society, the privileges of religious worship, and commits himself anew to a struggle with nature in the hope of bettering his position before he dies. Again, you find the old planters of Virginia and the Carolinas—men whose forefathers have dwelt there for generations before them—quitting their paternal homes, where they lived surrounded by every comfort, and launching into the untrodden wilds of Texas and Arkansas, where the virgin soil promises them a richer harvest. The graves of their forefathers, the sweet memories of home, the ties of ancient friendship, have no charm to detain them. The almighty dollar beckons them onward, and, spell-bound, they listen to its Syren voice. Wherever the traveller turns in America, he encounters manifestations of the same passion for advancement; the whole country resounds with the ceaseless hum of labour; everything seems to swim in a constant whirl of excitement; a sense of perfect repose is nowhere to be obtained. The stable and enduring relationships of old countries are there unknown; families are ever being broken up and dispersed, and

the members scattered, never to meet again. The lasting tie of friendship is seldom known, and little regarded; and when the term is used, it describes little more than transient acquaintance formed for mutual convenience. The Americans, beyond any other people, rest on their individuality, and are careless of the sympathy or approbation of their fellow men.

The natural consequence of this absorbing devotion to their material interest is that the intellectual life of the people is stunted, the higher walks of literature and science are comparatively deserted, and no people that possesses so great a mass of average intelligence can point to so few names of distinguished merit.

It is true that in the New England States, where society is constituted on a more durable basis, the higher forms of civilisation flourish. Nor can we deny the praise of considerable literary merit to the country that has produced a Longfellow, a Prescott, a Washington Irving, or a Beecher Stowe. But Boston is no fair type of American cities, nor Massachusetts of American States; and, despite a few brilliant exceptions, the prevailing characteristic of the people is intellectual mediocrity. To any one accustomed to the high standard of literary composition in England, and the elevated character of our periodical publications, the marked inferiority of those across the Atlantic is presently felt. The press there inundates the country with a flood of sickly, mawkish sentiment, weak, drivelling argument, and dubious morality, which no palate of ordinary refinement could endure; and yet the magazines and periodicals which circulate this trash are far the most popular and profitable; while beyond the limits of the New England States but few publications exist of average merit, judged by an English standard. The poverty of American light literature is, however, thrown into the shade by its newspaper press. The weakness of their novelists and essayists is often amusing; but the coarseness, vulgarity, and untruthfulness of their public journals is nauseous. The staple of many of the

leading newspapers consists of the grossest personal abuse, and articles are sometimes penned, so offensive to modesty, that they are unfit to be read in any family circle. In the great majority of cases, it is vain to seek any clue to their policy beyond a slavish devotion to their pecuniary interest. If the sale of their paper will be increased by trumping up a libellous attack on some public man; if the coarse palate of their readers will be gratified by unveiling the domestic privacy of some illustrious citizen; few American editors would stickle at these expedients to gain notoriety for their prints. I grant that honourable exceptions are found. The *New York Herald* is not a fair type of the entire American press, but unquestionably the general tone is infinitely inferior to the English standard; and though in ability and influence it compares advantageously with the fettered press of Continental Europe, it is unmatched in Christendom for ribald abuse and reckless mendacity. To the Englishman who has grown up in the belief that the freedom of the press is the palladium of liberty, it is painful to see this glorious institution so shamefully abused, and a handle afforded to Continental despots for withholding this blessing from their subjects. Symptoms, however, are not wanting to show that the public taste in America is improving; prints conducted on higher principles are gradually supplanting the baser issues; and it is expected by many intelligent citizens that the grosser blemishes that now disfigure the press will ultimately disappear. In this expectation we can only in part concur. No doubt, as refinement advances among the wealthier classes, the demand for a higher order of literature will increase; but so long as the preponderance of political power rests with the least educated class, journalists will be found willing to truckle to their prejudices, and buy popularity at the cost of principle.

At this point I feel bound to close my observations on the social economy of America; and my object will be effected if

they serve to give a juster idea of the character and capabilities of that great nation, than could be gathered from an exclusive attention to the working of its political institutions. They may also assist us in forming a sounder judgment of the destinies of the American people, to which I would now briefly invite attention.

Could we forget for a time the political abuses of America, and shut our eyes to the fearful dangers involved in the institution of slavery, the future of that country unfolds elements of grandeur that no cotemporary nation can boast of. The rapidity with which the American Republic has grown up to greatness has no parallel in the history of the world, and utterly throws into the shade the petty dynastic aggrandisements that constitute the chief triumph of most European nations. While oceans of blood have been spilt in Europe to gratify the petty ambition of kings and oligarchies, while desperate struggles have convulsed its people to effect some petty alteration in a frontier line, or to clutch some barren rock or worthless stronghold, a mighty nation has silently grown up in the western hemisphere, with population, resources, and political power far outweighing the prizes which centuries of European strife have brought to the victors.

When you contemplate the boundless territory of America, the unexampled fertility of its soil, its mighty rivers navigable for thousands of miles; and when you watch the immense stream of population, hardy, energetic, and enterprizing, that is flowing over these wide domains, the squabbles and contentions of Europe look paltry in the extreme. Then, and only then, does one fully estimate the impotence of diplomatic craft or military prowess to foster national greatness, compared with the peaceful development of the great laws of social and industrial progress.

When we throw into the background those blemishes that deform the fair picture of American greatness, we can hardly repress a feeling of pride at the grand destinies in store for the

Anglo-Saxon race. These little islands, which have reared the fairest fabric of freedom and happiness that human wisdom has yet constructed, and have radiated a wider influence through the globe than any nation since the days of Imperial Rome, must yet be content to submit to that limitation which their geographical conditions impose. But Providence, to work out his great designs, has reserved for this favoured race a splendid heritage in the New World, where for centuries they may multiply without restraint, and eventually acquire an ascendancy in the commonwealth of races of which history furnishes no example.

Nor need we look so very far into the future to forecast the development of this colossal movement. Judging from the existing ratio of increase, the close of this century will witness one hundred millions of the Anglo-Saxon race settled in America; which, added to the dense population of these isles, and their numerous offshoots elsewhere, will probably give a total of one hundred and fifty millions of people speaking the English language, cherishing the principles of freedom, and developing that social, industrial, and religious progress for which our race is specially adapted. By that period, which many of this generation may hope to witness, the Anglo-Saxon family, if true to themselves, will not need to be concerned about the intrigues or spite of hostile races.

No European nationality will probably reach one-half of their numbers, while in all the moral elements of power their superiority will be still more conspicuous. Nothing is more remarkable in ethnological history than the extraordinary development of this race in the last two centuries. At the time of the English Revolution it was greatly inferior to the French, German, or Spanish families in point of numbers, in material resources, or political influence; but now, in all these elements of power the Anglo-Saxon race is far ahead of its competitors, and before another century has run its course it bids fair to equal in these respects the united weight of all the nations of Christendom. Were it true,

then, that England could see in America nothing but the healthy development of her giant offspring, she could well afford to dispense with feelings of paltry jealousy; she might indulge in that sense of paternal pride with which a fond parent views the exploits of his sons, and is content that the glory of his house should, in their hands, be raised to a prouder eminence than he himself was able to carry it.

But this splendid prospect is sadly marred by a closer acquaintance with the affairs of our descendants, and it is with mixed feelings of joy and sorrow that England must contemplate their progress. She feels towards them like a parent whose pride in the prowess and exploits of his sons is dashed by a painful sense of their frailties and folly. She admires their colossal power, but deplores their unbridled passions.

It would be wholly out of place here to do more than glance at the political future of America. But I may observe that this branch of the subject naturally resolves itself into two divisions. It may be asked, in the first place, whether the existing federation of States will continue to hold together, and form one compact national body? and in the second place, whether the present democratic system will endure, and continue to embody the political creed of the American people, whether united in one vast republic, or split up into clusters of independent States? What I have said is not calculated to throw much light on the first of these questions. I have not made it my business to enter into the sectional disputes which at present convulse the Union, or examine the permanent causes of territorial antagonism which nurse the germs of discord. It is hardly necessary to observe that the supreme cause of dissension among the federated States springs out of the institution of Slavery; and into that momentous question I have not ventured to enter. I deemed it better to avoid its discussion altogether, than to present a hurried and inadequate sketch, unjust alike to the enormous interests at stake, and to my own conception of the nature and influence of the

system. In the absence, therefore, of this essential element for a full discussion of the question, I am not justified in advancing an opinion upon the political future of the American confederacy *as such.* It is needless, however to disguise the fact, that the angry sectional feeling which now agitates the Union shows the frailty of the bonds which unite that great confederacy: and though it is quite possible that Conservative counsels may yet prevail, and the Secession movement be arrested, it is evident that the seeds of dissension are deeply implanted in the body politic, and that no durable Union can be looked for when the component members are so ready to dissolve the compact, and fling the gauntlet of defiance at each other.

It is, however, far more important, in the cause of civilization and human progress, to enquire whether the system of pure democracy will continue to flourish in America, and extend with the Anglo-Saxon race over that vast Continent; and to this question my previous remarks are better fitted to furnish a reply.

We have already seen that the abuses of democratic government are rendered tolerable in the United States through the peculiarly favourable condition of society there. The immense resources of the country and the industrial energy of the people diffuse plenty and contentment on all sides, and remove for the present the risk of class animosity, while their geographical position exempts them from the danger of foreign aggression, and obviates the necessity of entrusting the executive with formidable powers; and it appears reasonable to assume that, so long as these conditions continue, the democratic institutions of America, with all their abuses, will survive; for undoubtedly the principles of political equality have sunk deep into the hearts of the people, and though they are now questioned by the intelligent upper classes, yet they are cherished by the great mass of the nation, nor would they surrender, without a fierce struggle, that power which they consider their inalienable right.

But a day will inevitably come, when the prairies of North

America will be covered with a dense population, and when the conditions of society in the Old World will be repeated in the New. The great cities will exhibit the spectacle of multitudes of work-people depending for subsistence on the employment of a few wealthy capitalists, and the fluctuations of trade will reproduce in America the alternations of prosperity and distress so well known in Europe ; and then, as Macaulay has predicted, it will be seen whether it is safe to intrust the predominant power to a class which may, in the frenzy of want, subvert in a day the fabric of civilization it took ages to construct. It may be safely predicted that the duration of democratic government in America will be limited by the elasticity of its material resources. When the conditions of old society re-appear and a sharp line of distinction divides the propertied from the non-propertied classes, then, in seasons of distress, popular sovereignty will result in anarchy, and either society will be dissolved, or social order preserved by the destruction of liberty.

This event, however, depends upon causes too remote to excite a lively interest in the present day. Mankind view without concern those dangers from which themselves and their immediate descendants are exempt ; and if American institutions are to last till the Indian Hunting-grounds are peopled like the Netherlands, the advocates of democracy will consider their cause triumphant. But unhappily a germ of danger lies concealed, which may some day ripen with precocious growth, and produce the most baneful fruits. However the present agitation may result, the great American confederacy may, and probably will, break up before many years have elapsed ; rival nations will be parted by the Ohio ; and the mutual hatred of New England and the Carolinas will be embittered by hostile tariffs and retaliatory laws. In some moment of passion blood may be spilt, and the latent animosity of the people kindle into flame, and that most terrible of all wars, a fratricidal struggle, may desolate the land. In that fiery ordeal democratic government

would assuredly perish. The energetic conduct of great military operations would not be found consistent with the vacillation of popular assemblies; and the selfish intrigues of corrupt politicians would become intolerable, when the gravest interests of the community were lodged in their hands.

If ever North America—which God forbid—becomes the theatre of a bloody contest, it may safely be predicted that some military dictator will trample out its much-abused liberty. Some modern Cæsar or Napoleon will emerge from the anarchy of civil strife, and, by founding a despotism, restore order to the State. I should not, however, look upon this danger as imminent, nor confidently predict so disastrous an issue to the liberties of America. There exist in that country the most powerful bonds to unite in amity its various sections. A gigantic internal commerce has interwoven their interests so closely, that no party could strike a blow at its rival without lacerating itself; while the industrial energy of the American people makes them cautious and conservative in the extreme, when their material interests are at stake. It is therefore highly improbable that the existing agitation will result in civil war. If the Union is now dissolved, the separation will be peaceably effected, and the practical instincts of the American people may long succeed in averting strife. Still the danger cannot be overlooked; for, while slavery exists, an indestructible germ of discord remains, and the fuel is piled up, which a casual spark may kindle into flame.

And now, I would, in conclusion, offer a single remark. I may be charged with drawing too dark a picture of the social and political state of America. I feel that the natural inference from the premises here laid down would be more gloomy than is warranted by a just appreciation of all the elements that enter into the national life of that country. Neither is it possible for any one, who faithfully delineates its institutions, to escape this imputation entirely; for it so happens that most

of the evils under which America labours appear in the foreground, while its peculiar advantages lie concealed in the background; its abuses are glaringly conspicuous in places of public resort, while its virtues lie hid in the domestic retirement of its citizens. But our business is rather to deal with the public than the private life of the nation—rather to describe its external organization than its internal and domestic economy; and so we are constrained, by a consistent regard to the line of argument imposed on us, consciously to draw a picture in some respects one-sided. It may appear not to be acting a manly part, to travel under the Ægis of American liberty, and enjoy the frank hospitality of that generous people, and then return to malign their institutions, and expose their private maladies. No Englishman can travel through the American Union, and enter into the social life of the people, without carrying away a warm recollection of their courtesy, urbanity, and disinterested kindness. He will meet among the more intelligent citizens, a class of men who, for dignity of deportment, frank generosity, and cultivated intellect, will compare with the proudest aristocracy of Europe; and he will be equally struck with the self-reliance and manly independence of the working classes, who in these respects are far ahead of the corresponding strata of society elsewhere. In all these sentiments I cordially participate. I recognise beneath the scum and refuse that float on the surface of American society, a strong under-current of private worth and manly virtue, a great fund of active intelligence, patriotism, and self-denial, that would, under a happier system of government, adorn the nation, and exalt the sacred cause of liberty. I would even go so far as to admit that, putting slavery aside, the American Republic may perhaps contain a greater aggregate of industrious contentment and happiness than is found at this day in any other nation of Christendom.

But while I cheerfully recognise these facts, I cannot blind

myself to the gross abuses that tarnish the political system of that commonwealth, and threaten, if unchecked, to involve it in ultimate ruin. Nor can I refrain from emphatically expressing this conviction, however much it may conflict with English sympathies, and with that pride and admiration in which the mother country is prone to indulge, when she contemplates the greatness of her giant progeny.

# BRITISH RULE IN INDIA (1864).

THE aim of the following remarks is to give a sketch of the impressions made upon the writer by a trip to India the previous year. The points sought to be pourtrayed are, the social economy of the country, and the attitude which the British Government holds in regard to it; from these are deduced certain conclusions, which it is hoped may commend themselves to the judgment of the reader.

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It is no easy matter for a European mind to comprehend the state of society in an Oriental country. Its structure is so totally different from ours, the ideas by which it is governed so opposite, that there is wanting a chain of association to connect the two systems, and enable the mind to bridge over the gulf that lies between them.

Words fail to convey to the European mind a true conception of Asiatic life. To be understood thoroughly it must be seen, its atmosphere must be breathed, its spirit inhaled. The utmost a writer can do is to paint in vivid colours the scenes he describes, and attempt not so much to present a philosophic generalisation as a speaking likeness. The English people will best comprehend their duties to India when a true and living picture of that country is set before them; their judgment will be sounder and juster than if it was schooled in the highest lessons of political wisdom, without possessing that perceptive knowledge.

When we speak of India in common discourse, the mind is

apt to dwell on a picture of great and opulent cities, gorgeous temples, native courts adorned with barbaric splendour, and great accumulations of private wealth. This is the olden idea of romance, but it is now becoming obsolete in intelligent circles; it still retains, however, a stronger hold on the public mind than we are apt to imagine. The India of reality is strangely different; it is not a land of great cities and barbaric splendour, but a continent of rural peasant life.

The face of the country is just the reverse of that of England. The mainspring of our social life resides in cities, where half the population is collected, and far more than half the vigour and intelligence of the nation. But in India you see a prodigious population subsisting by the simplest and rudest agriculture, with few great cities comparatively, and few seats of thought and activity. The social state of India is, speaking broadly, one vast level expanse, without cohesiveness or organisation. It resembles those creations on the borders of the animal kingdom that have no articulation or vital centre, but only a pulpy mass, pervaded by a faint vitality, and capable of minute subdivision without impairing their organic existence.

So in India, there is no brain to the body politic; no nervous organisation that binds together the congeries of peoples into one sentient whole. A chill stagnant vitality, is equally diffused over the whole country, and you may dismember it indefinitely without altering its social physiognomy.

The India with which England has to deal is a country of ignorant peasants, and the great questions she has to solve are those arising out of the occupancy of the soil; and it is to this I desire in the first place to draw attention.

From time immemorial it has been held in India that the government had the right to dispose of the soil. The notion of absolute private ownership had no existence in the minds of the people. Strange as it may appear to us in England, accustomed

to regard private property in the soil as the most sacred of rights, the idea of such right is foreign to the Hindoo mind, and in a great measure to the whole social economy of the East. The primary conception of landed property that obtains in India is, that the government holds the soil as a trustee for the benefit of the people, its function being to farm it out in such a manner as to give them subsistence and provide a sufficient revenue for the state.

But the absolute ownership of the soil was not held to reside with the government alone.

It was also foreign to the mind of a Hindoo that the government should dispossess the cultivators of the land they tilled, or sell the right of ownership to strangers. The proprietary right of the government was limited by ancient usages, which had all the force of law. The peasantry, or *ryots*, as they are styled in India, were viewed as the lawful occupants of the soil, having just as good a right to be the tenants of the Crown, as the Crown had to act as their landlord. The ownership of the land was in fact a partnership, between the government on the one hand and the peasantry on the other; but the conditions of the contract were ever varying, the government sometimes obtaining a larger share, and sometimes a less one of the produce, according as it was strong or weak, tyrannical or humane.

But between these two extremes of the social system a middle class sprang up in the native states of India, being persons who undertook to collect the rent due from the cultivators and pay it to the government. They resembled somewhat the farmers-general of the revenue known in France before the Revolution, and were generally styled in India Zemindars.

These men, however, went far beyond the functions properly devolving on them in the economy of society. They made contracts with the government to furnish a certain amount of revenue from certain districts, and got the use of the powers of government to exact payment. They became in fact petty local

tyrants, whose object was to extort as much as they could from the unhappy peasantry, and defraud the government, as far as they dared, of its proper share.

Looked at from another point of view, they may be described as a territorial aristocracy, holding an intermediate place between the government and the people, but without any well defined rights. Though their office was not hereditary, and they were removable at the pleasure of the prince, yet in practice they were seldom dismissed, and in many states of India they grew into a powerful nobility. The original theory, however, was never lost sight of, that the peasantry were the lawful possessors of the land, in partnership with the government, while the Zemindars were only collectors of the revenue, and public servants.

It must be observed, however, that the principles laid down here are not deducible from any recognised code of jurisprudence extant among the Hindoos; the germs of them may, indeed, be found in their ancient sacred books, but their sanctions are wholly obsolete. We cannot rank these principles as anything higher than a collection of usages which have grown up in the course of centuries, and had their origin in remote antiquity. Their parentage was probably nothing more than the necessities of society constructed on an Oriental basis; and their charter now is only the prescriptive right of thousands of years of traditionary existence. Indeed, all the systems of thought and modes of life existing in India resolve themselves, when closely analysed, into a bundle of traditions, handed down from father to son from time immemorial. The Hindoo mind receives, with implicit confidence, the lessons it is taught. It does not search for truth, with natural instinct, like the eager intellect of Europe; and so we are too apt to judge of Indian systems by our own, and to frame them with philosophical completeness, whereas they have no pretensions to any such correctness of structure.

But however this may be, it is a matter of history, that when

the English first came in contact with India, they found the social relations of the body politic in a state of anarchy. A system of petty despotisms brooded over the land, and the most shameless oppression was practised by every depositary of power, from the great Mogul down to the pettiest Rajah. The undisguised object of every ruler was to extort as much from his subjects as possible, without raising them in rebellion; and selfish indulgence was looked upon as the only reward of power. The poor helpless cultivators were the victims of intolerable oppression; the larger part of the country was ruled by Mahometan Princes, while the great bulk of the population was Hindoo, and this added the element of religious discord to the breach that selfishness and rapacity had made between rulers and people. The old theory of a paternal government managing the national domain for the benefit of the people had become obsolete, if, indeed, it ever existed. If the rural population enjoyed anywhere some degree of security, it was only because their oppressors were too weak to coerce them.

This is the state of things to which the British government succeeded in India, and its great work from the beginning of its rule to the present day has been to limit and define proprietary rights in the soil. In the various wars that it waged, its antagonists were never *the people*, properly speaking. *They* were always a neutral inert mass; its opponents were the native princes, and sometimes the native aristocracies, and when their power was broken, the cultivators of the soil acquiesced as willingly in the sway of the foreign as of the native rulers. As one territory after another lapsed into the hands of the British, the government found itself burdened with the whole social economy of the people; it became the proprietor of the lands, and had an immense peasant population for its tenants. But the situation was so novel and unfamiliar to English minds, that the gravest mistakes were committed in ignorance by our early Indian statesmen. When the conquests of Clive and

Hastings had placed Bengal at our disposal, the government found themselves in a labyrinth of perplexity as to how to deal with the rights of the forty millions of people suddenly entrusted to their care. It was totally impossible for a few Englishmen to fix the land tenures for so vast a population, or assess the petty holdings of some millions of ryots. But a machinery appeared to be made ready for their hands. They found a class of Zemindars, who collected the land revenue for the native governments, and exercised many of the functions of a territorial aristocracy. Our government, misconceiving the true character of these officials, and despairing of any equitable way of dealing directly with the ryots, resolved to recognise the Zemindars as the true owners of the soil, and proceeded to give them what the native governments had never done, an indefeasible right to the land, subject to a fixed tribute to the government. It was thought by Lord Cornwallis, who was the author of this settlement, that the absolute proprietary right conferred on the Zemindars would promote the improvement of the soil. He argued, that if they were assured of the possession of their estates, they would feel a strong interest in their prosperity; and, instead of rack-renting the ryots to squeeze all they could out of the land during an uncertain tenure, they would take a fatherly interest in the welfare of the peasant population.

The motives which dictated the Bengal settlement were humane and disinterested; but the results proved sadly at variance with the expectations of its designers. The Zemindars turned out a cruel, avaricious, and self-indulgent class. They ground down the ryots with excessive exactions; and took no interest whatever in the improvement of their lands, or the happiness of the people. They lived, in short, as untaught Orientals generally do, solely for selfish and sensual gratification. The government discovered, when too late, the fatal mistake it had committed; but the injury done was almost irreparable; and Bengal, though naturally the wealthiest province

of India, has possessed up till the last few years the most degraded and miserable population. The ryots have been habitually ground down to the lowest stage of animal existence; and while the rural population of most of India has been rapidly advancing in prosperity in the last few years, that of Bengal is only beginning to follow slowly in the wake.

History affords few more impressive warnings of the danger of legislating hastily and irrevocably for an alien people. It shows that mistaken philanthropy may perpetrate grievous wrongs; and that it is presumptuous and unjust for a nation, because it is civilised, to thrust its own maxims and usages unadvisedly upon an ignorant and inferior race.

But the British government did not commit this fault again. Warned by the failure of the Zemindary settlement in Bengal, they entered into direct relations with the cultivators in most other parts of India. They recognised no intermediate class, but treated the ryots as tenants of the government. With immense labour, they surveyed the land, and carried out a minute system of assessment, valuing the soil according to its quality, or the crops it produced. An intricate system of machinery was devised to carry out this policy. The country was parcelled out into districts; at the head of which was placed an English magistrate, called a collector, with two or three English assistants.

Under them was placed a large staff of native officials. Each village had its petty native magistrate, each group of villages its superior officer; till, through ascending grades, the English superintendent was reached at last. By this means the annual rent of the ryots, often not exceeding a few shillings per head, was collected systematically. The government account with every peasant was registered; and probably the most laborious system of taxation the world ever saw was set in motion.

At first, the custom was to assess the ryots annually, varying the land rent according to the value of the produce and the

character of the seasons. In bad years, it was customary to grant remission of rent, or to let the arrears lie over till more prosperous seasons.

But it was found that this plan involved immense labour, and gave boundless scope to fraud; and besides, it afforded but little inducement to the ryot to improve his farm, as his lease was very uncertain: so the idea of granting long settlements to the cultivators at a fixed rent sprang up. Before this could be done, however, it was needful to resurvey the land with scrupulous nicety—a work of extraordinary magnitude, when you consider that British India covers an area half the size of Europe, and that such a survey has only been carried out in this country within the last few years.

It was commenced, however, if I am not mistaken, some twenty or thirty years ago, and has been proceeding rapidly ever since. A large part of India has now been surveyed with wonderful accuracy: every field is measured, the quality of the soil described, its occupant registered, and the terms of his lease recorded. The first portion of India that received the benefit of this system was the "North-west Provinces;" and in them the lands were settled on the cultivators at a fixed rent for thirty years—a measure that has been attended with great success. In the Bombay Presidency, the same system is being carried out, and the bulk of the land is also settled on the same terms. Indeed, without going into minute details, it may be said that the great principle of land settlement now adopted in India is that of giving long leases to the actual cultivators at a fixed rent, and it is allowed to have answered the purpose well.

The status, then, of the rural population through most of India is this; they hold the land as tenants of the government, at a rent fixed by it for long periods, generally thirty years. At the end of this time the government can raise its rates, and charge whatever increase of rent it thinks proper; but it is well understood in practice that the peasantry are not to be dispos-

sessed, or the lands let to the highest bidder. The government assesses them at what it considers a fair rent, and then gives the preference to the old tenant; and only thinks of changing him if he declines to take them at the government valuation—a very uncommon occurrence. This is, I venture to say, something like a true picture of the remarkable position the British government in India holds to the vast rural population of that country. It is a position of extraordinary power and responsibility, and one altogether unexampled in the history of the world. Some eighty millions of people, say nearly half the population of India, owe their rights and subsistence directly to the government; and that government is lodged in the hands of a few—a very few—administrators, chosen from an alien race.

But, to bring out into bolder relief the social economy of India, I must give some further account of its rural population.

There is no such thing in India as isolated peasant life; the cottages of the ryots are not scattered, as in England, broadcast over the land, but are everywhere grouped into villages. In travelling through the interior of India, you never come upon detached houses; the population is all gathered into small local centres. The husbandman issues from his village in the morning to till his fields, and returns thither in the evening. The richest soil will lie vacant unless a cluster of people can be settled down as a "village community;" no separate individuals will occupy it alone. The unit of Hindoo social life is the village community, and its structure is curiously complex.

From the remotest antiquity the system of *caste* has prevailed in India. Under this regime the social rank and profession of every individual of the community is arbitrarily fixed. The occupation of the father descends to the son, and no change is permitted, under dire religious and social penalties; for centuries the same handicraft has descended in the same families; and the ordinary Hindoo would as soon think of aping the habits of

the angels, as of rising to a profession which belongs to a higher caste. The number of castes is very great, and to a European mind the distinctions between them are not intelligible. Each caste has in general its own specific trade or trades allotted to it; and the members of it must intermarry with each other, and hold little or no social intercourse with other castes. So deep-rooted is the prejudice of caste, that in the same village you will find perhaps a dozen classes, none of whom will enter the houses of the others, eat with them, or sometimes even touch them. The highest caste of all is the *Brahmin*, or priestly one, which looks down with infinite contempt upon the inferior grades. From it are drawn all the ministers of their religion; and although its members are held free to follow several callings, yet, when left to their free action, as in the States under native Hindoo rulers, they disdain to sully their hands with work, and exact a maintenance from the common people, who regard them with infinite respect.

This caste system underlies the whole social life of India, and preys like a cancer on its vital powers. It prevents all fusion of the separate interests of the community, and destroys the natural affinities of human minds. In the same village there is no community of action or feeling; the natural dictates of human kindness are stifled by the impenetrable barriers of caste. A poor ryot will be dying of disease in his cabin, and famishing for want of food; and his next neighbour, if he belongs to a higher caste, will possibly enough let him perish, sooner than defile himself by crossing his threshold. The social life of India is indeed a strange and melancholy picture; it is a hoary fabric of mouldering superstitions; it is a stagnant pool of corrupt and senseless usages. And these are clung to with such rare tenacity, that even a century of contact with Christianity and civilisation has done little to loosen that hold. The religion of the Hindoo regulates his life exclusively. It prescribes every action, and binds him with a thousand fetters;

it is the main-spring of his degradation, and the invincible barrier to all improvement. And yet, as an ethical system, it is morally and intellectually contemptible; it is but a mass of noisome and puerile superstition, and cannot be reduced to any order or symmetry. I am not unaware that in some of the primeval records of their faith there are germs of purity and truth; but I am describing now the system as it exists and operates in the present day, and has indeed operated as far back as history extends.

The spectacle of a Hindoo community is indeed strange to a European observer. A listless apathy weighs on its social life; it floats down the stream of existence with a dreamy unconcern. Year after year passes by, age after age, and its aspect is changeless as the face of the heavens. The husbandman turns up the soil with his yoke of bullocks and a crooked stick, just as his ancestors did a thousand years before; his wife grinds the corn each day with a stone, which she turns with the hand, as Sarah might have done in patriarchal times; the females of the village come in from the well in the evening, with earthen pitchers of water on their heads, as Rebecca did three thousand years before. As you pass along the street you hear the whirr of the spinning-wheel, from which the housewife draws out the tiny cotton thread, which is woven into a strip of cloth by a loom such as Homer describes. At the corner of the street stands a rude idol—a misshapen figure of an ape, it may be—smeared with red ochre, and the passers-by make their salaam to it mechanically. Ask them the grounds of their belief, and they can give no intelligible answer; their thinking powers are dormant; they have grown up into a system of ghostly unrealities, they have imbibed the noxious atmosphere unconsciously; and millions after millions pass away, before an original germ of thought is evolved.

And yet, with all its moral turpitude and torpor, the social life of India is not without its sentimental and romantic side. It

wears an aspect of repose which contrasts pleasantly with the turbulent stream of European life. There is no noise, no bustle, no outward jarring and friction in the wheels of life, in a Hindoo village. During the heat of the day a drowsy indolence pervades the atmosphere, the sound of labour is hushed, and you see the natives stretched on the ground, and dosing after their mid-day meal. In the calm, still evening that precedes an Eastern sunset, you see the husbandmen slowly wending their way home, driving their little bullock carts with noiseless tread. In the morning, you wake up to no stir like the bustle of an English town; the brute creation are mute, like their lords; the very dogs are too lazy to bark.

To a European emerging from the din and hubbub of Western civilization, India seems like a land of shades; far away he hears the roar and conflict of the outer world, but here nature does her work with gloved hand and hushed footfall, and Time steals by with noiseless tread.

He will be more than mortal that can resist the contagion, and keep up in the interior of India the fervid energy of his Western life.

I have now attempted to draw a picture of the social life of India, and more especially its rural life, which will suffice, I hope, to make it plain how the British power has established itself so firmly in that country.

In a society constituted on a European basis it would be totally impossible for a foreign race to rule so vast a population with so little physical force. Before the late mutiny the British regiments in India mustered about 40,000 bayonets, and now they number 70,000; while the population directly under our government is 120 millions, and adding that under native rulers, but subjected to our surveillance, the total is little short of 200 millions; in other words, a small British force holds a country as large and populous as Europe, excluding Russia.

But the reason of this is obvious ; there is no real community of feeling among the people ; there is no national life, no national literature, no national traditions. The rural population possesses no centres of thought, no channels through which popular convictions can make their way. Over most of the country it possesses no chieftains or nobles, no natural leaders ; it is a dead level of humble apathetic peasants, as little concerned with political changes as with science or philosophy. Moreover, the Hindoo peasant loves quiet and security, and these he obtains in perfection from the British government. Under the native princes the whole country was filled with lawless violence ; injustice and oppression were rampant ; force and fraud were the great levers of government ; but now the strong arm of the British government protects the weak, and dispenses to the best of its ability equal justice. There is therefore every reason that the peasantry of India should be content with their present masters ; and undoubtedly they are content, so far as they reflect on such subjects at all. If India contained no elements of national life beyond what I have sketched already, it is difficult to see what danger could menace our power.

Under the rule of the old "East India Company," the object of the government was to keep India in this state ; they wished the people to remain timid, ignorant, and tractable, that their administration might be as little troublesome as possible. Their system was admirably adapted to that end. They limited the European element in India, so far as possible, to their own servants, and these were thoroughly saturated with their own maxims and traditions. They treated the natives of India with a uniform policy, severe yet conciliatory, always keeping them at a great distance, and inculcating immense respect for the white race. They disliked the intrusion of independent Europeans, lest their disrespect for authority should infect the natives, and the open expression of their opinions should stir up controversy. The "Company" discouraged education among

the natives, because it found their ignorance made them docile and submissive; it threw obstacles in the way of Missionaries, and humoured the native superstitions, because it was content with things as they were.

The European servants of the Company came from home in early life, and took root in the soil of India; they spent the best of their lives there, and came to understand the native character thoroughly; they imbibed many of its prejudices, and were liked by the people in consequence; they were skilful rulers, but poor reformers, and India in their hands might have slumbered on for generations to come.

The policy of the British government, however, has changed very greatly in the last few years, and new elements are coming into play, which are transforming the social aspect of India; to those I would now direct attention.

"The schoolmaster is abroad" may be said of India at the present day, and his presence there will make far more momentous changes than bayonets and diplomacy can accomplish. The government has now fairly accepted the obligation of educating the people of India, and their efforts in that direction are beginning to bear fruit. At Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, as well as at the more important cities in the interior, excellent schools and colleges have been established, for teaching both the English and native languages and literature to Indian students. Besides the government Institutions, there are many admirable establishments conducted by the Missionaries of the various Christian churches, and thousands of the youth of India are now annually turned out of these schools with as thorough a mental training as the average of European students take from the Universities. The effects of this are already visible in the society of the large towns. At Calcutta and Bombay especially there is a considerable class of educated natives, some of whom, for intellectual endowments, may compare not unfavourably with the best

specimens of European culture. To the importance which education gives, the native society of these cities adds the influence of enormous wealth. I have already described India as a very poor country, and this is strictly true as applied to the whole population; but its industrial system encourages the accumulation of wealth in a few hands, and the native merchants of Calcutta and Bombay may vie in opulence with the richest commercial circles of Europe.

It seldom happens, indeed, that the possession of wealth and high mental culture meet in the same individual, for English education is very modern, and those who have profited by it are chiefly young men; whereas the heads of the commercial community are generally old men; but the sons of these merchants are receiving the education their fathers wanted, and another generation will see both wealth and intelligence united in a degree that India has never known before. Already there is a native press conducted at all the large towns, and political and social questions are handled with surprising justness and vigour. I know not how many native journals are now in existence at Calcutta, but I should think not fewer than in Liverpool. Most of the conductors of these papers are men who have graduated in the English colleges, and their modes of thought and habits of reasoning are formed upon English exemplars.

During the first half of the present century, public opinion could hardly be said to have existed in India, but now the opinion of the native community is unmistakably pronounced. Wherever public opinion finds a means of expression, it becomes a power in the state, and India will be no exception to that rule.

The tone of the Indian press is upon the whole loyal to the government, more so than might be expected by those who know how difficult it is to inspire any people with feelings of loyalty to a foreign government. Still there are mutterings of discontent expressed from time to time at the state of tutelage in

which India is held by her foreign rulers. By those who have mixed in the more intelligent circles of native society, it will not be denied that a feeling of soreness exists at their complete exclusion from all share in political power.

In explanation of this feeling, it is necessary to allude briefly to the constitution of our Indian government. According to the present system, the supreme authority in every department is lodged exclusively in European hands. The only respect in which the natives are nominally associated with us in the work of legislation, is by the admission of some native members to the supreme legislative council of the empire, and the inferior councils of the presidency towns. But these native members are appointed by the English government, and are chosen, of course, from subjects avowedly loyal; they are, besides, generally men of great wealth and high social standing, but not remarkable for vigour of intelligence; and their presence in the council chamber operates in no effectual manner in deciding the policy of the government. Besides, the legislative councils themselves—in which the majority is always English—are little more than consulting bodies, and may be overruled by their respective governors. The government of India is in truth despotic. The machinery of councils is a convenient mode of bringing public intelligence to the aid of government; but there its functions cease, and the supreme responsibility rests with government alone—that government being represented by the Secretary of State for India at home, and the Governor-General of India abroad. I do not undertake here to discuss the grounds upon which the natives of India have been debarred from all direct share in the administration; I only mention the fact to account for the discontent that undoubtedly exists among the more intelligent natives on this point.

There is, however, one avenue to political power open to the natives of India, which they are beginning to discover. I allude to the appointments to the "civil service" of India, made in

this country by competitive examinations. Shut out in their own country from all opportunity of rising into the ranks of the governing class, they are beginning to cross the sea, to the home of their conquerors, to compete with them for the honour of administering the affairs of India. Amongst the great changes made in the theory of Indian government when the East India Company was finally superseded by the Crown, was the opening of the civil service to the natives of India, subject to the same conditions as applied to their English competitors. This change was little thought of at the time, and was for some years practically inoperative ; but if I am not mistaken, it will be pregnant with great results in the future. As the law now stands, there is no valid objection that I am aware of to a Parsee or Hindoo youth, who passes the examinations in this country successfully, entering the civil service of India on equal terms with Europeans. Up to the present time, few have had the courage to try ; the natives of India have an almost invincible repugnance to foreign travel, which is fortified by the interdict of the Hindoo religion ; but education is beginning to overthrow these prejudices. The Parsee community—a small, but most enterprising sect—is already sending many of its youth to Europe, and the Hindoos are beginning to follow. Large donations have been given by the wealthier natives to defray the expense of a European education ; and several candidates are now coming forward to contest the coveted honours of Indian political life. It is believed—I know not with what truth—by the natives of India, that captious objections have been made by the English authorities to their youth in this country, and unfair obstructions thrown in their way. I have listened myself to bitter and indignant comments upon this alleged partiality. Whether these allegations be true or not, I do not stay to enquire. I adduce them simply to show how resolute the natives are in attempting to gain admission for their youth into the ranks of the governing class.

Now, when it is considered what the functions of the Civil Service are, the great importance of this question will become apparent. The whole civil administration of British India, and the surveillance of the semi-independent native States, is entrusted to it. From the young cadets who leave this country, annually are chosen the magistrates, who dispense justice and administer the local government to nearly two hundred millions of people.

Beginning with inferior posts, they rise partly by seniority, but also in great measure by merit; till a person who, in this country, would never have emerged from the mediocrity of private life, becomes the chief authority in a province containing some millions of people.

There are but very few posts in the administration of India to which a civil servant may not aspire. Still, it must be borne in mind that these officials are only the employees of government, and have no legislative power except by consent of the government. But, even admitting this reservation, it is evident that a large infusion of natives into the civil service would alter greatly the machinery of government in India, and give in practice a new distribution to political power. This question cannot be shirked any longer; it must be honestly faced, and its issues foreseen and provided against. The days of governing India purely by the sword, and exclusively by English administrative machinery, are passing away. We are educating the people, and teaching them to govern themselves. We cannot stop half-way in this process; we dare not awaken a desire, and then refuse to gratify it; we have deliberately adopted a policy which leads by a logical sequence to the fusion of the native with the European element in the work of governing India, and it remains for us now calmly and manfully to consider the consequences.

To those whose knowledge of human nature is derived from contact with men of the same race, religion, and customs, it is

hard to explain the peculiar difficulties that surround this question. It may seem to them a simple enough and easy enough transition to admit educated natives of India little by little to administrative posts, putting them on the same level with Europeans, and allowing them to rise according to their merit. The Parsee or Hindoo who establishes himself in business here is treated with as much respect as an Englishman, and judged by no prejudice of colour, but by his commercial conduct alone. If he is honest, upright, and truthful, he receives the same confidence and support in mercantile circles that an Englishman would; and so it may be argued, by those whose experience extends no further, that the same happy relationships may exist in India. But, alas! it is not so. The old proverb of the poet, "Cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt," does not appear to hold good with our countrymen in India. When they land on that shore, a change comes over them; and they awake from their innocent dream of human equality to a proud consciousness of Anglo-Saxon superiority. The fact is indisputable that the Englishman in any eastern country conducts himself as a "lord of creation." He comes in contact with a weak, shuffling, and servile race, and he asserts at once a divine right of supremacy. The modest youth, who shrank from the idea of quarrelling with a street porter at home, scarce lands in India till he learns to thrash his native servants, and indulge in scurrilous abuse of the so-called "niggers."

The majority of Europeans go to India very young; and but few of them possess sufficient strength of character or religious principle to keep this arrogant propensity in check. The change from the restraint of civilized society to the licence of a rude one, too often upsets their equilibrium, and the English character is sadly belied in India by the excesses of its representatives. It is true that this offensive exhibition of arrogance is chiefly confined to the younger men; the older residents in India are more dignified in their deportment and more indulgent of the natives;

and, to do them justice, it must be allowed that they display many of the finest traits of the English gentleman. Still, the whole European community is leavened by the pride of race, and recoils from the thought of being placed on equal terms with the native population. The idea of being brought before a Hindoo magistrate, and punished by native officials, is intolerable to the Anglo-Indian, and could not be carried out at the present day without risk of rebellion. It would be wrong, however, to charge this haughty feeling of our countrymen in India solely to their domineering and insolent temper; it is caused in the main by the degraded character of the people they have to deal with. They find in the ordinary Hindoo a creature without moral principle, and destitute of all sense of honour; a weak, shuffling, treacherous character; an adept in the art of deception, but a stranger to truth and honesty. They find the fabric of Indian society rotten to the core—a low grovelling selfishness stifling generous emotions, family affections corrupted, social obligations slighted. They find, by bitter experience, that no dependence can be placed on their native subordinates—their servants cheat them and steal from them as a mere matter of course—their clerks take bribes to deceive their masters—the merchant finds that his coolies pilfer his goods whenever they have the chance—the judge finds that his native officers perjure themselves to serve any client that will buy their testimony. Through all the relations of society the curse of untruthfulness reigns, and old Anglo-Indians, in dealing with the natives, seldom dream of trusting their word, unless it serves their interest to speak the truth.

The great difficulty of governing India justly, springs from this cause—the European officials are a mere handful, and they are obliged to depend upon native agency to carry out their instructions; but it is notorious that the native agents almost invariably use their power for corrupt ends, whenever they have a chance, so that I have often heard it stated that the adminis-

tration of justice in the courts of India was a farce, as it was impossible for the English magistrate to penetrate the inextricable net-work of lying and misrepresentation that enveloped every case. It was a mere by-word in Bombay, that as many oaths could be purchased in the Bazaar as you had rupees to spend. This treachery and corruption is not confined to the grossly ignorant; the clever Brahmin official, whom you meet in every court of justice in India, and who speaks English fluently, is a perfect master of intrigue; he is indispensable to his European master, and he knows it well; he hates the English because they despise him, he longs for their expulsion from the country because he hopes to step into their place; but he is far too timorous to risk a rebellion; he quails before the resolute self-reliance of the Anglo-Saxon race, and is fain to fatten under their protection.*

This may appear a high-coloured picture to some, but I believe it is only the naked truth, and it may serve to explain what would otherwise seem inexplicable, why the fusion of Europeans and natives in the administration of India is so difficult to carry out. The meanness of the native character is certainly no excuse for the arrogance of our countrymen; their insolence is often as revolting to a man of correct feelings as the duplicity of the Hindoo; still, we have to deal with the unalterable fact, that a broad barrier of taste and character separates

* It will of course be understood that the above description applies to the natives of India as a mass. There are important exceptions to those general statements, as all persons acquainted with India will testify. The character of the Sikhs and hill tribes is very different from that of the Hindoos, truthfulness and honesty being virtues in high esteem among them. The Parsee community also, a small but influential sect, chiefly located at Bombay, is distinguished for the high commercial character, and public spirit of many of its members. Their munificent donations to charitable objects, especially of late years, have been on a scale seldom equalled in Europe, and some of the more enlightened Hindoo merchants are following them in generous rivalry. It must be well understood that the remarks made above do not detract in any way from the high reputation which several members of the native community deservedly enjoy. It is to be hoped that these exceptions will become more numerous.

the two races, and how to blend in harmonious action such jarring elements is the difficult problem to be solved in India.

In handling political questions, it is generally thought to be incumbent on the writer to prescribe a remedy for the evils he deplores. It is not held sufficient to analyse the case, and point out the elements of mischief, without providing some infallible specific to cure them. From this I must ask to be excused. I am not able to suggest any effectual means of solving the difficult problem that has been raised; it is inherent in our occupation of India as an alien and conquering people, and cannot be got over by any ingenuity or statecraft. I can scarcely believe that a thorough and cordial fusion of Europeans and natives in the government of India is practicable, unless indeed there is a marked elevation in the moral tone of the latter. Let it not be supposed from this, however, that I regret the liberal policy adopted by the Crown in regard to the natives of India; it was manifestly called for in the interests of equity; the time had arrived when it would have been unjust and invidious to have kept the door of preferment shut any longer to our Indian fellow-subjects, and it is better for a great nation nobly to do the right in spite of dangerous consequences, than ignobly to shirk its duty for the sake of selfish expediency.

I am fully prepared to admit, however, that if England continued to govern India, as she has done in time past, on the principle of keeping its people in a state of pupilage, she might have a long lease of undisturbed supremacy. If she were discouraging education, and frowning on native dreams of ambition, it would be long before that timid and flexible race would think of disputing her right to govern. Nay, more; the material prosperity of the people might be greater under such a regime than under the mixed government we are supposing. There is an iron energy about a thorough-going system of absolutism, which a popular government wants. Were the English to

remain the sole rulers of India, there would be a distinctness in their policy, and a fixity in their arms, which would be wanting if a native element with its caprices and prejudices were introduced. Still, this is not the question to be settled; the British nation has come, by a train of circumstances it did not foresee, to hold in India the supreme authority over one-sixth of the human race. Its manifest duty towards that immense population is to promote its highest welfare. It holds the position of trustee to a people in a state of childhood, and it is accountable to the Supreme Ruler of all for the faithful discharge of that trust. But to educate and raise the people in the scale of intelligence and virtue is one of the first duties of a paternal government; and all the material benefits we can confer on India are trifling compared with the opportunity we can give it, to emerge from the slough of ignorance and debasement, in which it has weltered for ages.

But we cannot educate the people without imparting to them a sense of political justice, and an aspiration for political power. When we teach the youth of India the History of England, we cannot eliminate its burning spirit of patriotism and justice. When we indoctrinate them with the ethics and philosophy of Europe, we cannot blind them to its reflex bearing on their own position. There is indeed no middle ground upon which we can stand, between educating the people of India and opening to them the door of political rights. In the natural course of things, a long time must indeed elapse before they can draw to themselves a substantial share of political power; they have to compete with the flower of the youth of England, having all the advantages of high civilization and careful training on their side; they have to oppose the flexible temperament of the Hindoo to the stubborn energy of the Anglo-Saxon; and it cannot be doubted that, even in the fair open field of competition, our countrymen in India will hold their ground. Still it must be remembered that, as education spreads in India, there will ever

be rising to the surface a greater number of cultivated minds. Though the Hindoo is slow to initiate, and is the slave of custom, he is apt to learn from others, and imbibes with wonderful quickness the teaching of Europeans. There can be no manner of doubt that the India of the future will produce highly trained and accomplished minds, men who will hold their own in the arena of intellect with their English compeers.

But, passing from this side of the question, let us direct our attention to one other consideration, which is of paramount importance in enabling us to form a correct judgment of the permanency of our sway in India.

The British rulers of India are not merely foreigners in race, but by virtue of their physical constitution they must ever be "strangers and sojourners" in that country. The Anglo-Saxon race cannot be acclimatised in India—in that tropical clime, their native vigour rapidly declines; the old Anglo-Indian sighs after home like an exile in a foreign land; he finds his health failing, and premature decay sapping his powers, and his only restorative is a return to his bracing northern clime. It is a rare thing to find an Englishman in India who is willing to end his days there; they all endure their Indian life as a necessary evil, but look forward with ardent longing to release from their servitude. In the earlier days of our Indian empire it was somewhat different, communication with home was rare and difficult, and few inducements were offered to the servants of the company to return to England. English ladies seldom braved the perils of an Eastern journey, and our countrymen lacked the domestic tie which should keep alive the memory of home. But now all this is changed, the English officer takes his wife to India, and sends his family home for health and education to the mother country. A frequent communication is kept up between them, the monotony of Indian service is broken by long furloughs, and after a term of service,

not exceeding half the span of mature life, the Anglo-Indian returns home with an ample pension to enjoy the recompense of his Eastern exile. The children of Europeans who are reared in India, are, with few exceptions, feeble and spiritless. It is an axiom with parents that their children must be sent to Europe in early childhood, if their constitution is to be preserved intact. So it happens that family life in India is painfully broken up, parents and families are seldom united, and another powerful motive is added to quicken the desire of the Anglo-Indian to return to his native country. These circumstances impress a character of changefulness upon the British occupation of India. There is a constant flux in the European element—there is little room for the growth of local affections or neighbourly sympathies. The civilian moves from province to province, the official from station to station, having no leisure nor inclination to cultivate intimacy with the natives. There is no room for the growth of anything like the feudal, or patriarchal system, where the superior race becomes grafted as it were upon the inferior one, and antipathies of blood die away in the intimate union of interests. The English race in India have no point of contact with the natives; they are strangers and sojourners in a foreign land, and it is very unlikely, indeed we may say impossible, that they will ever be anything else.

Now, it is evident that the government of a great country cannot always be carried on under such a transitionary system; it is clearly opposed to the natural laws of human development; it is beyond all doubt a provisional arrangement, which must give place some day to a more durable political fabric. There have been many instances where a superior race has conquered an inferior one, and retained its ascendancy afterwards; but it was by amalgamation and naturalisation: there are no instances of a foreign race permanently ruling a vast population with whom they never blended, and whose country never became their home. Indeed, we may safely go further, and say that it

never can be for the interest of any people permanently to be ruled by foreigners. In India, it is true, there are still wanting all the elements of healthy national life; and a foreign rule, even though it was much worse than our own, would be better than the anarchy that would ensue if the people were left to themselves. But foreign rulers can never have that intimate knowledge of a people's wants which its own representatives possess. Half the time of our countrymen in India is spent in learning the customs of the people; and just when they have attained to a high state of efficiency their term of service expires, or their health breaks down, and they rush off to England, and cast their Indian experience to the winds. Our system of governing India is like the endless task of the Danaides—to fill broken pitchers by pouring in water. We are pouring a constant stream of English talent into India; and just when it ripens into usefulness, it is drained away by the causes I have mentioned. If India possessed an enlightened class, with the moral qualities necessary for good government, there is no doubt that they would be better rulers than the English; and if ever the time comes when India possesses such a class, and is prepared to submit to their sway, our moral right to rule will have ceased, and our interest, not less than our duty, will require us to relinquish the trust.

If the views here enunciated be correct, it is clearly the duty of England to carry out in practice that fusion of native and European agency, in the administration of India, which the government now admits in theory to be just. At the same time, it would be extremely impolitic to open the door too fast. It will be very long indeed, to all human foresight, before India produces a class able to replace advantageously European statesmen. It would be an extremely dangerous thing to relax our hold on that country while the people are utterly unfit for self-government; and besides, it would be a foolish thing to widen the breach that already subsists between Europeans and Hin-

doos, by importing wholesale into the ranks of the administrative body clever but unprincipled natives. If the great difficulty of fusing the two races in the administration of the government is to be overcome at all, it must be by selecting natives eminently qualified, by moral character not less than ability, to co-operate with Europeans; and the change must be so gradual, that the present feeling of repugnance on the part of our countrymen may have time to subside.

It may be asked, How is all this to be effected? If the youth of India are to compete on equal terms with our own, and enter the government service according to their attainments how is the selective process to be carried out? What test of moral character is to be adopted? I am not prepared to answer these questions; to do so would require a more intimate acquaintance with the mechanism of Indian official life. But, as the power of granting appointments rests with the British government in India, it appears not impossible that it might carry out some such policy as is sketched here.

There is one condition I have not yet touched upon, which appears indispensable to the formation of a class capable of aiding us in the government of India, and that is the spread of Christianity in that country. Mere education will not change the character of the Hindoo; it may induce a superficial gloss, but the inherent rottenness will obtrude itself when the touchstone of self-interest is applied. The mere dress of European civilisation will not suffice to give moral stamina to natures corrupted by Paganism. The late mutiny proved too well that all the treachery and savageness of the heathen could lurk under the guise of outward refinement. Nena Sahib was an agreeable companion to English gentlemen, and seemed to have imbibed the maxims of European civilisation; but when the mask could be dropped, the villany of his nature burst out. If no stronger influence than education is brought to bear upon the Hindoo, there will be many Nena Sahibs in disguise; and

a deeply-rooted suspicion of their native colleagues will infect the minds of English officials.

I grant that the Indian youth who are sent to this country in boyhood, and have their minds indoctrinated with European teaching, will in general return to India with a firmer moral character, and obey a higher standard through life, even though they refuse to accept our religion; but it is a mere handful of Indian youth who can ever be trained in Europe. If the masses of India are to be regenerated, it must be by an agency working among themselves; and this agency is the Christian faith. Nothing short of this can attack successfully the moral ulcer that preys upon the life of India; nothing short of this can prepare a class of men who will be faithful and high-minded guardians of the people; nothing short of this will produce a hearty alliance between European and Hindoo in the work of governing India. Christianity has been the vital centre of all true civilisation since the Christian era, and it alone can be the real regenerator of India. I would not by any means go so far as to say that the government should propagate Christianity in India; but, looking at this question simply from a political point of view, we as a nation should encourage by all means in our power the spread of the Christian religion in India. It may be that this will prove the means of solving the great difficulties that lie before us in carrying on the government of that country. If we are faithful to our trust in this matter, we may be spared that supreme crisis, when the native intelligence of India will revolt irrevocably against foreign supremacy.

But it is no less important for England to send Christian statesmen to India, than to encourage Missionaries and other avowed agencies for diffusing Christianity. Oriental nations, like all nations, but in a greater degree than Western ones, learn by imitation. The shining qualities of a good man, placed in an eminent position, exerts a wonderful influence in India. Men like the late Havelock, and Sir Henry Laurence, and the present

noble Governor-General, have a marvellous power over the natives, proceeding from the consistent rectitude of their life. These weak Orientals cling with confiding faith to the massive character of a religious ruler; they feel that in his hands they are safe; they admire him for his unselfishness and genuine humility; though they do not understand the springs of his life, they feel instinctively that it flows from a higher source than their own. Our roll of Indian statesmen contains many brilliant examples of such men, and it is they who have done most to consolidate our hold on India. It is a matter of the utmost moment that men of this stamp should represent the British nation; if they were more numerous, a readier ear would be lent to the teaching of the Missionaries, and English rule would be endeared to the natives, not more by its direct benefits than by the benignant influence of those who wield it.

Before concluding, I cannot refrain from expressing the hope that England will prove equal to the great mission she has undertaken in the East. She holds a position of unexampled power and responsibility; she possesses the most splendid field for displaying governing qualities that any nation ever enjoyed. Her subjects in India outnumber those that the Roman empire embraced in its widest sweep; and her power is more absolute than the rule of Augustus or Trajan. She boasts of the highest civilisation and the purest religion in Europe—perhaps in the world. Let her prove the possession of these blessings by the justness and purity of her government in India. I believe, upon the whole, British rule in the East has been honourable to an enlightened nation, especially in recent years; but the necessity that it should be so is becoming more urgent. There are keen and watchful eyes turned upon our policy, and the flaws and specks that disfigure it will be treasured up against us. We are educating critics in India that will try us by the maxims of Europe. Let us fence ourselves against their future attacks by unimpeachable conduct now.

Above all, let our great object be to govern India for the benefit of India, not for the good of England; let us not attempt to thrust commercial or political measures on that country when the secret motive is our own gain. Let us cultivate spokesmen for India who will heartily defend its interests, and be slow to act against their honest convictions of right. Let us delegate a large discretion to wise and good statesmen in India, and secure them as far as possible from ignorant meddling at home. If the British nation consistently carries out this policy, her mission in the East will be a glorious one. She will have a boundless field, in which her energy, her philanthropy, and religion may exert themselves with potent effect. A bond of endearment will link the mother to the daughter; and when the time comes that the daughter needs no longer maternal restraint, the tie may be dissolved, without leaving irritation behind—and India will cherish through distant ages the pleasant memory of British rule.

## "WAR IN RELATION TO MODERN CIVILISATION."*

I PROPOSE, in the following remarks, to glance at the question, how far the occurrence of war is lessened by the progress of civilisation, in other words, to enquire whether modern society has better safeguards against this calamity, than were possessed in earlier ages of the world.

There was a time not far remote, when good men thought that the age of war had passed away. Europe for one generation had scarcely heard the cannon's roar. America was the modern Utopia where mankind, emancipated from old world oppression, were to be swayed for ever by the sceptre of reason. Only in the far East did an occasional explosion break the universal calm, when some mouldering fragment of Asiatic barbarism fell before the advancing tide of Western civilisation.

It began to be thought that men had grown too rational, if not too religious, to rush into war, and philanthropists were busy devising Courts of Arbitration to settle the disputes that sprang up between nations.

But all the while a volcano was slumbering beneath their feet, which burst upon Europe at the Revolution of 1848. It was found that an utter want of harmony existed between governments and peoples, and that nothing but an appeal to force could secure the latter a hearing. So Europe was remodelled after a fierce struggle, and the rights of the governed were enlarged at the expense of their Rulers, though to an extent considerably short of the people's claims.

* This address from the chair of a literary society, was delivered in April 1865, shortly before the close of the American War.

Next arose the question of "nationalities." It was found that the political combinations of Europe were composed of incongruous materials; geographical boundaries were discovered to be at variance with the natural affinities of race; and these affinities asserted their strength in a way that the old diplomatists never dreamt of. Empires and kingdoms that for centuries had figured with rotund proportions on the map of Europe were threatened with dissolution. No compromise was found possible between the irrepressible forces of national affinity and those of hereditary dominion, and this volcanic agency is still active in the European system, threatening further conflicts. But besides these sources of modern warfare, which spring out of the wants of modern society, there remains the old lust of territorial aggrandisement, and Europe has witnessed within the last ten years one great war at least springing from this source. But who could have foretold that the most furious of all wars was to be waged on the virgin fields of the new world? There was no conflict there between the wishes of the people, and the will of their Rulers, because the rulers derived their power entirely from the people; there was no troublesome question of nationality, because the whole community was homogeneous—or if not strictly so, yet the dominant race was strong enough to absorb and assimilate the alien elements; nor was there scope for territorial ambition, for the United States embraced a continent within itself, and it could confidently await the day when its immense assimilative power would absorb the outlying territory. Indeed, it seemed to be free from all the provocatives to strife which beset the nations of the Old World, and might justly be described as the fairest field for human society to work out its problems without appealing to the rude arbitrament of the sword. If ever there was a nation or a country where the pacific influence of modern civilisation could have free scope, surely that nation was the Anglo-Saxon race settled on the continent of North America.

For had not civilisation endowed them with its choicest blessings? It had provided them with a political system the freest and most elastic the world ever saw—it had given them a form of religion the purest and most enlightened, and a system of education the most complete and universal—it had diffused through the whole community a degree of intelligence above the average of other nations, and a measure of material prosperity which no people had ever before attained to.

Where could there be a field in which all the forces of civilisation had fuller scope to develope themselves, or where they had erected a fairer fabric? And yet we behold this enlightened and prosperous community plunged into a struggle which for waste of life and happiness has scarcely a parallel in modern times; it is enough to make the philanthropist despair of the progress of the race; it is enough to make the philosopher to doubt whether after all civilisation carries in its bosom those blessings which are commonly ascribed to it. In order, then, to form an opinion on this weighty question, whether modern civilisation tends to prevent warfare, I propose to enquire briefly what are the causes of war in general, and how far these causes are affected by the conditions of modern civilisation. My object will be to shew what motives to warfare are removed or lessened by the existing social condition of mankind—and what other motives (if there be such) are heightened and intensified by it.

I would briefly summarise the causes of War as follows:—

1*st. Antipathy of Race.*
2*d. National and Dynastic Ambition.*
3*d. Religious Intolerance.*
4*th. Commercial Rivalry.*
5*th. Antagonism of Institutions.*

These five causes I regard in the main, and speaking broadly and historically, as the leading incitements to war; and I think this tabular arrangement in some measure coincides with their

chronological order. Of course it will be understood that I do not go back to the rudimentary stages of society, when warfare was but another name for robbery and violence. I am dealing here with Society organised more or less into a national form, and acting in its collective capacity.

Now, I think it will be found in the ancient world that national antipathy, and national and dynastic ambition were the great sources of contention. With regard to the first of these, I would observe that the races of mankind were then divided by sharper lines of demarcation, than now exist in the civilised world, there was greater unlikeness between the different branches of the human family, and that alone is provocative of hostility, when religion does not exert its mollifying power. The Greeks and Persians, the Romans and Carthagenians, the Germans and the Gauls, were so dissimilar in tastes and customs that antagonism of race was inevitable. Wherever they came in contact, a collision was the consequence.

It is hardly necessary to do more than point out this cause, it is so transparent, and it is equally evident that it has the fullest scope in an ignorant and barbarous state of mankind. At the same time it would be folly to deny that it is still an active agent in fomenting quarrels, and particularly in adding bitterness to them when once begun ; the antipathy of Saxon and Celt, of Muscovite and Pole being a question of blood no less than of politics. All that I contend for is, that in the later ages of the world this cause does not of itself suffice to create wars, at least among the so-called civilised states, whereas in earlier times it was a prime agent and itself an adequate cause of relentless and exterminating warfare.

National and Dynastic ambition is the next cause I have specified, and this, it will be allowed, has been a most fertile source of warfare in all history.

Next to the elevation of the individual man, is the aggrandisement of the community of which he is a member, and the

influence of this motive has in all ages been extraordinary. But it is in the ancient world that we find its fullest development, it is there that we see love of conquest, the master passion of kings and nations, impelling them to exertions and sacrifices that seem incredible to our utilitarian age; not that national ambition is dead in the present day, it is still a mighty influence and becomes occasionally the ruling passion of a nation. Yet it is chastened and purified to some extent by higher and worthier motives; but in ancient times the motive power was purely selfish and egotistical. The oriental monarchs sought to extend their dominions solely to gratify their pride, the Greek and Roman Republics waged wars of conquest to satiate the greed, and flatter the vanity of their citizens. When nations now-a-days covet territory it is done under a decent disguise. When Russia desires to rob the "sick man," it is only to protect the interests of the Greek population. When Germany dismembers Denmark it is to liberate the Saxon from Scandinavian oppression, and when France sends her eagles to Rome it is to save the Papacy from sacrilegious violence. But in the ancient world no such pretence was thought necessary, "Salus Reipublicæ lex Suprema," was the motto of a patriot. It was held to be a proof of the virtue of Cato that he kept sounding in the ears of the senate the historic words, "Delenda est Carthago," and when that hated rival succumbed to the Roman power, no generous counsels interposed to shield it from utter destruction. Patriotism in the ancient world never expanded into philanthropy, the affections of a citizen were bounded by his state, and that a Greek should consult the interests of Asiatics, or a Roman befriend a Carthagenian was at once a folly and a crime. Hence martial glory was esteemed in the old world the most honourable aim, and conquest was openly avowed as the most worthy pursuit of a nation. Further, the classic idea of conquest was very different from the modern; the ruling race in ancient times lorded it over its subjects as the feudal chieftain

in the middle ages did over his vassals. The persons and property of the conquered people were held to be at the mercy of the victor, and the spectacle of a whole nation reduçed to slavery was not uncommon in the ancient world. But in modern Christendom conquest is only a rude way of effecting amalgamation, the more powerful race is only too glad to assimilate the weaker, and political greatness is sought far more from the fusion of homogeneous elements than from the compulsory unification of the sword. In this respect there is a radical difference between the spirit of ambition in ancient times, and in this nineteenth century, and the difference is altogether to our advantage. National aggrandisement now means the absorption of foreigners into the body politic, to share the life and add to the strength of the whole; in ancient times it meant the spoliation of inferior races for the enrichment of the dominant ones.

For these reasons we conclude that though ambition is far from dead in the politics of modern times it is not such an active agent of mischief as in the barbarous ages of the world, and this change must be attributed in the main to the larger views and humaner principles of modern civilization.

*Religious Intolerance* comes next to be noticed as a prolific source of war. The ancient world of heathendom was at least free from this stain. Religion sat too loosely on the conscience of Greek or Roman to prompt Crusades of propagandism. With all their faults the nations of antiquity cannot be charged with religious intolerance. True, Socrates perished under the accusation of despising the gods, but this was a solecism in ancient history, and the cases were few where difference of belief occasioned the shedding of blood. The fact is, the so-called religion of heathendom was too incoherent a system to nurture bigotry, it did not take sufficient hold on the convictions of men to induce them to proselytise, nor did it admit of such radical difference of creed as to breed antagonism between nations. The real reasons why religious wars did not prevail before the Christian era was,

that religion did not exist as a master power over the human mind. But the saddest page in the history of our race is that which records the blood-red story of religious strife. No antipathy of race, no lust of conquest have wrought greater havoc, than this fell destroyer. It has awakened every base passion of the human breast, and converted mankind into fiends; the bloodthirstiness of the savage has been surpassed by the infernal malice of the bigot, the fury of the pagan warrior pales before the ferocity of the religious fanatic.

No sooner did Christianity permeate the old world than it awoke the spirit of persecution. It was essentially an aggressive power, for though it denounced propagandism by force, it equally denounced the false superstitions of the age, and so awoke the slumbering animosity of corrupt human nature to its severe and searching truths—the heathen world was content to tolerate the diverse forms of paganism, but it joined in a common opposition to this common foe.

The entrance of Christianity on the field of history gave a new complexion to human society, and the interests of religion began to rank henceforward as the foremost in human estimation, and difference on that score became the incessant cause of contention. For three centuries Christianity was a persecuted Creed, and was the occasion not so much of warfare as of bloodshed. Thenceforth it was the dominant power, and for twelve centuries was yoked to intolerance and became itself a persecutor and tyrant. Adown the dreary vista of the middle ages we see little of the pure and elevating genius of the Christian religion. We gaze upon that odious mixture of truth and falsehood, of faith and fanaticism, and almost hesitate to give it a preference to the torpid corruption of paganism. As the centuries advanced, this caricature of Christianity became more gaunt and hideous, and when we reach the times of Philip and the Inquisition, of Alva, and St. Bartholomew, we feel ourselves in the presence of demons, not of men.

In these dark ages the outraged genius of religion was invoked to cover every crime, and Christianity in its corrupt and bastard form was the chief promoter of strife, bloodshed, and war among the nations of Europe. To summarize the connection that has subsisted between religion and war, it may be said in brief that a corrupt form of Christianity prevailed during the middle ages, and crushed out religious liberty under the heel of persecution. That religious wars were not incessant simply arose from the fact that intolerance reigned supreme, but when the human conscience emancipated itself, Europe was overspread with strife—wars the most bitter that history records, burst out on every side, and no durable basis of peace was established till the doctrine of religious liberty emerged from the Chaos, and became paramount in the councils of nations. The most glorious heritage bestowed on mankind in these latter days of civilization is this doctrine of religious liberty—not that it is universally admitted even in Christendom ; the recent encyclical epistle of the Holy Father reminds us of that, but it is now the dominant power and it carries in its bosom the richest blessings for humanity.

In this rapid survey of religious intolerance I have confined myself to Christendom, but I might have alluded to the great outburst of Moslem fanaticism as bearing upon the question of religious wars. For ten centuries this marvellous power waged a deadly struggle with Christendom. Indeed, if we look to the extent of territory, the population involved, and the quantity of blood spilt, it may be a question whether religious fanaticism has not sacrificed as many hecatombs under the standard of the Crescent as the Cross.

But this powerful agent of discord appears to have run its course. For some generations the world has been spared fierce wars of religion, the spirit of modern times is diametrically opposed to them, the general acknowledgement of the rights of conscience, the juster conceptions of religion, the increasing identity of material interests, all tend to make religious

Crusades obsolete. I think we may justly claim for modern civilization a pacific tendency on this score; not that we would hazard the assertion that religious wars have ceased for ever. This would be a rash assertion to make, but it is beyond doubt that the whole tendency of modern thought is in favour of religious toleration, and the ruling forces of modern society are essentially opposed to Ecclesiastical tyranny.

The fourth cause of war I specified was—*Commercial Rivalry.*

Chronologically considered it coincides with religious intolerance, and marks the middle stage of social progress. In the ancient world commerce was not of sufficient importance to arouse the warlike passions of mankind; at the present day its principles are too well understood to make it a source of national contention; but in the dawn of modern civilization the advantages of commerce were appreciated enough to excite the cupidity of nations, without being understood sufficiently to shew their community of interest. The furious wars of the Italian Republics were prompted by commercial rivalry, and the subsequent struggles between the maritime powers of the north of Europe were attributable to the same cause. The Dutch and English, the Portuguese and Spaniards, all had their period of mercantile ambition, and each battled in turn to win a colonial Empire, and hold the dominion of the seas. Commercial greatness in these days was founded upon monopoly and enhanced by the humiliation of rivals, each trading nation regarded its neighbour with jealousy, and looked upon commercial competitors as its natural enemies. It is needless to point out how fertile a source of war was this pernicious delusion; its history is written with a pen of blood in the annals of Europe for the last three centuries, and it is still within the memory of living Statesmen that wars for the sake of commercial advantage were deemed politic. But no science has made more rapid strides in recent years than that of political economy, and its foundation truth may be described to be the community of interest between nations and individuals in the production and

distribution of wealth. It overturns these theories which represented nations as industrially opposed to each other, and proves to demonstration that the prosperity of each people involves material gain to its neighbours. It will not be denied that the diffusion of economical knowledge tends to promote harmony among nations, and its benignant influence is one of the striking characteristics of the age. Commerce that was long an apple of discord, has become a bond of brotherhood, and it is now a political maxim that in proportion as a nation becomes commercial, to that extent she grows pacific. It is not many years since philanthropists saw in the rapid extension of trade the earnest of universal peace; that dream has been rudely dispelled, not because the genius of commerce was falsely interpreted, but because human passion proved too impetuous for the fetters of trade to confine it. With the spectacle of the American Republic convulsed by civil war, it is too late to assert that commerce is a panacea for the ills of mankind, for there never was a case where the ties of commercial interest were stronger, and yet they were broken like tow at the touch of fire, when confronted with stronger passions. Still, this does not detract from the truth that international trade is a pacific influence in the present day, and when we consider the frequent wars that it gave rise to in former times from ignorance of its laws, we may credit modern civilization with having changed this powerful agent from a source of discord into a cementer of peace.

The last of the incentives to war which I enumerated was, *Antagonism of Political Institutions.*

By this I mean systems of government which are dissimilar, and therefore unfriendly to each other, and social arrangements which are based upon conflicting principles. This is the most complex of all the causes of war I have specified, and does not admit of strict logical definition, but it will not be hard to show that it is one of the most energetic causes of strife among nations. When a Republic

adjoins a Monarchy there is necessarily a want of sympathy between the governments; royalty dreads the spread of democratic sentiments, and naturally tries to curb a power whose fundamental maxims are a denial of the rights by which it exists. It is not possible that there can be cordial alliance between a democracy and an arbitrary monarch. The genius of democracy in the present age is propagandist, and if surrounding nations are governed by kings or oligarchies there will certainly be hostile feeling and most probably hostile action. Speaking generally, and all such questions can only be stated broadly and with some degree of looseness, it may be asserted that antagonism of political institutions only came into play as an occasion of war between nations on the outburst of the French Revolution of last century. Previous to that period the world had been governed in the main by Autocrats, or Aristocracies, and the masses of mankind neither possessed political rights nor claimed them. Cities and provinces were bought and sold by the magnates of Europe, as if they were goods and chattels. It is true there were a few republics such as the Dutch and Italian Commonwealths, where more liberal views prevailed, but their principles were not diffusive, they did not seek to propagate them abroad, and so they did not come into collision with the neighbouring monarchies, merely because they were politically unlike. The Republican governments of those days were as selfish as the despotic ones, and never dreamt of spreading liberal ideas for the sake of philanthropy. But with the French Revolution a new era commenced—oppressed and down-trodden humanity rose upon its tyrants, and inaugurated amid unutterable horrors, the reign of a new order of things. From France the doctrines of popular right spread throughout Europe, and from that day to this, there have been constantly recurring outbreaks, revolutions, and wars. It is not pretended, of course, that the aggressive career of the first Napoleon was due simply to the conflict of political principles, but it was

rendered possible by these, and derived much aliment from them. The French nation from that period has been generally looked upon as the champion of popular and national rights, as opposed to hereditary and dynastic pretensions. But this is not the place to discuss the politics of modern Europe; except in so far as they throw light upon the causes of war; what I attempt to prove is simply this, that the spread of liberal principles, and the assertion of popular rights is a conspicuous feature of modern civilisation, and brings in its train that antagonism between nations and governments which often produces war. To this cause more than any other would I attribute the civil war in America. The existence of slave institutions in the Southern States had engendered a feeling of discord and ill-will between them and the free States of the North. The pulpit of the South proclaimed that negro slavery was in accordance with Divine Law, while that of the North denounced it as sacrilege; the Press of the South upheld the system, while the Northern papers—though with many notable exceptions decried it; the halls of Congress resounded with incessant and rancorous debates on that thorny topic; wherever the citizens of the opposing sections met in assembly, this bone of contention interrupted their harmony. And this is quite compatible with the fact that the majority of the Northern people were content to acquiesce in an alliance with the system, and that many proceeded from toleration to approval. In all cases of opposing systems, it is never the masses who raise the battle cry, it is the earnest, or it may be the fanatical few, and such a minority then was in the Northern States, who kept up an incessant agitation on the question, and were answered jeer for jeer by the exasperated zealots of the South. And so the feeling of antagonism spread till the slave-holding section determined to be free from an association which had become hateful and which it feared would become dangerous. This is not the place to exhume the stale question of the rights and

wrongs of the American war. I am not speaking now of the proximate or immediate occasion of the rupture, but only of the fundamental or originating cause, namely, that sectional antipathy which sprang from dissimilarity of institutions. Returning from America to Europe, we may observe that the great wars of the future threaten to come from this cause. The rotten fabric of Mahometan power in Turkey, must some day fall before the attacking forces of western civilisation, and its downfall is but too apt to be a source of violent European dissension. The great empire of Russia is now being sown with the seed of liberal ideas. The illustrious prince who fills the throne is the prime mover in the work of social regeneration, and his wise initiative may prevent, at least in his day, servile or revolutionary wars. The monarchy in Russia is now the guardian of the people, but the time will come when popular rights must be enlarged at the expense of the Crown, and if Royalty then is not more unselfish than it has generally shewn itself in hereditary dynasties, we may expect a period of revolutions and wars. The same result may be expected as liberal institutions spread from the west of Europe towards the east. If popular government asserts its rights in Germany, it will first breed intestine strife in that prince-ridden country, and then provoke collision with the despotism of Russia. The eastern powers of Europe maintain amity at present because a common instinct of self-preservation binds the Autocrats together, but the time is not far distant, when central Europe will ripen for popular government, and the natural alliance with Russia will terminate. Further, it may be observed that the spread of free institutions will resuscitate the claims of nationalities. It is easy for an Autocrat or an Oligarchy to govern a heterogeneous empire, because the wishes of the populations can be repressed by military force, and the government being vested in a single head gives a seeming unity to the political edifice, but where a popular form of government prevails these anta-

gonisms of race find expression, and often provoke dissension. Were Austria a constitutional government, still more if it were a Republic, it is difficult to conceive that Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Sclaves, Croats and Poles could be held together by voluntary association.

It is very evident that the triumphs of popular rights in Europe, will sever its political ties, and be attended by many and sanguinary wars. Organic changes in human society, whether these proceed from religious, social, or political causes, have been since the Christian era the prime causes of war. The entrance of Christianity wrought a radical change in Europe, and for that reason it came into collision with the hostile forces that ruled before, and the result was religious wars.

The same phenomenon was repeated at the era of the Reformation when a purer form of religion emerged and fought its way through fierce opposition into a permanent place among the powers of the world. Then commerce became the ambition of nations, and its entrance on the stage of human affairs was ushered in by wars—time-worn prejudices had to be overcome, unjust privileges had to be abolished, before it took its place as an arbiter of peace in the councils of nations. Then, lastly, came the great organic change of what we may term political emancipation.

The world had been ruled by hereditary and irresponsible governments. The masses of mankind had been treated as incapable of having political rights, and with some justice too, as they were destitute of political intelligence; but the time arrived when knowledge penetrated from the surface to the depths of human society, and along with that knowledge came the aspiration for political rights—the natural desire for self-government. A crisis arrived when the privileged classes must either make concessions or fight for supremacy, and in most European countries the battle either has been, or must be fought. This last organic change in human society is still in active

progress, and so long as it is confronted by powerful enemies, there exist the materials for war.

On a broad view of the question it must be admitted, however, that the tendency of modern civilization is on the side of peace, it has in a great measure exploded the motives to war which agitated the ancient and mediæval world; mankind, at least in Christendom, no longer fight to impose unintelligible creeds upon rebellious consciences, nor to force unwilling customers to purchase commodities produced by others; nor do they in the same degree as they did in earlier ages, rush into wars of aggression for the sake of empire. But one great source of warfare remains, and it is hard to say whether it is not fraught with as much peril to the peace of nations as any of the others. The present age is one of political progress, the growing intelligence of mankind is elevating the masses, and bringing them into collision with privileged authority. Happy the country like our own, where free and peaceable development is allowed to these forces, but unhappy the people where development can only be procured by the sword. The very fact that the present age is one of progress, tends to multiply wars of this kind. The governments of Europe were founded upon a different order of things, and they cannot identify themselves with the popular elements, nor will society attain stability till the governments are brought into harmony with the wants of the people, and political organizations are reconstituted on enlightened principles. To speak broadly, the main causes of wars in the future are likely to be the spread of purer and more equitable doctrines of social and political right among mankind. The principles of progress and enlightenment will come into collision with selfish and obstructive interests, and the conflict will often end in war. It appears therefore that a nobler element will underlie the wars of the future than those of the past, and the result will more likely be gain to the human race.

The political regeneration of Italy is a specimen of the good

results that may accrue from war conducted on modern ideas. Such a result would in the last century have been pronounced chimerical, but it is in keeping with the character of the present age.

I must not be understood, however, to pronounce even a qualified eulogium upon War in the abstract, it is an evil and a scourge, however it may be carried on, and for whatever end it may be waged—at times it may be a necessary evil, and at times it may produce much ultimate good, but in all cases it brings indescribable misery in its train,—and causes ills only less terrible than those it seeks to remedy. I look with no complacency upon the wars of modern civilization, however plausible may be their pretext; they are invariably associated with the malignant passions of human nature, and bring untold suffering upon innocent victims. All I contend for is merely this—that the moral element plays a more important part in the wars of the present day, than it did in former ages; their object is upon the whole more rational, and their results more frequently promote the cause of social and political progress.

There is one respect in which modern civilization may be chargeable with a tendency to quarrelsomeness, and which merits a passing notice before concluding. It favours the spread of liberal institutions, and the growth of popular intelligence, and these very circumstances make nations more sensitive, and quicker to receive and resent an insult.

The newspaper press in democratic communities is too often a fomentor of mischievous quarrels. An "Alabama," is launched, or a "Trent" is boarded, and forthwith that hundred-headed Hydra cries out for vengeance. Before the facts of the case are investigated, or time for reparation afforded, the busy panderers to spurious patriotism, stir up strife among the people. Two great communities, it may be, are brought to the brink of war, because some accident has happened which the press on either side magnifies and distorts till the public mind is excited to fever-heat.

Far be it from me to assert, that the press which has been an instrument of incalculable good, is uniformly a minister of strife between nations. Many organs honourably distinguish themselves in this, and other countries, by casting oil on the troubled waters; but still as an impartial spectator, and a friend of free institutions, I feel bound to admit, that a democratic press is far too often found on the side of vindictive passion. I speak with special reference to the case of America—where the press, both North and South, by its bitter recriminations, and shameful misrepresentations, was a prime agent in causing this unhappy war. The same ungoverned power has repeatedly lashed the American people into a fury against this country; and it may be fairly asserted, that if the executive had allowed the press to interpret and guide the foreign policy of the country, the United States would have been involved in endless wars with this, and other European countries. If popular government is to become general throughout the world, some means must be devised for interposing a barrier between the language of the press and the action of the government.

In former times long-winded diplomacy gave time for momentary irritations to subside, but now-a-days the press would hurry everything to an immediate arbitrament, and as the whole nation acts and thinks simultaneously, the concentrated force of popular passion becomes a tremendous power. It will be a question of vast importance for good men to devise safeguards against this inflammable tendency of popular institutions, otherwise the very causes that make nations enlightened and prosperous, will bring them oftener into hostile collision.

My remarks have now come to a close. I wish I could have painted the future in brighter colours, but a sacred regard for truth forbids this.

Among the dreams of good men, none have been indulged more fondly than the hope of universal peace; but with the light of recent events, no one, who pretends to the power of reflection, can cherish such a delusion any longer. So long as

selfishness, ignorance, and pride, are master passions in the human breast, so long must war be looked upon as a terrible necessity in our social system. But it is a comfort to reflect that it is no longer regarded as the only field where true laurels can be reaped. Just as moral and religious truth make their way among nations, and influence their policy, may we expect war to be viewed with deeper abhorrence. Just in proportion as the will of God is regarded as the supreme law among communities of men, to that extent will the provocations to war diminish, and the disputes of nations be settled by the arbitrament of reason.

# REFLECTIONS SUGGESTED BY A SECOND VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THERE is no country at the present day where the student of politics and social science can learn so many lessons as in the United States of America. He comes into contact there with a busy ferment of ideas to which the old world is a stranger. He hears every possible theory of human right propounded, he sees every moral and intellectual force in fullest activity; in short, he sees human society possessing all the advantages of civilization, but unfettered by its traditions, working out for itself anew the social and political problems which the old world has been solving with tardy progress these last three thousand years.

Prior to the great civil war, it might be said that American institutions and ideas had not been fairly tested, but that can be said no longer. That tremendous conflict passed them through the ordeal of a fiery furnace, and enabled foreign nations to decide, with a certainty not possible before, wherein they were sound and wherein they were faulty.

Our former visit to America was paid in the year 1860, and was confined chiefly to the Southern States; the visit paid last year (1866) was confined entirely to the Northern States. As on the former occasion, our experience of American Institutions was drawn chiefly from Southern data, so, on this occasion, it was derived chiefly from Northern; and it must be understood that we are looking at matters in the main from a Northern point of view.

We propose, in fact, to transcribe some of the impressions made on the mind of a traveller in the North, who has lived among the people, watched their daily life, read their newspapers,

attended their public meetings, taken every opportunity of conversing with intelligent men, and sought to carry away a truthful photograph of the political, social, and industrial life of the American people.

I would begin by observing that no impression of the country is so vivid, or leaves so deep a trace upon the mind of a foreigner, as the simple conception of its vastness. It is easy to master the geographical details, and express, in the language of statistics, the area of the country, the volume of its lakes and rivers, &c., but no realising conception can be formed by the mind, without travelling over a portion of these vast domains. You spend day after day on fast river steamers or railway trains; you get wearied with the unceasing flight of half-cleared forest land or broad prairie; you speed on, week after week, tarrying for brief rest at the new-built cities; but still spending the bulk of your waking hours at the back of the steam-engine; and when you reach your destination, almost giddy with the whirl of perpetual motion, and turn to your map to see what you have accomplished, you notice, with a feeling of dismay, that your weary wanderings have only embraced a corner of the Great Republic; and you feel ready to exclaim, like the angel who traversed the universe to find the end of creation, Alas! there is no end.

Never has it fallen to the lot of any civilised community to possess so rich an inheritance of virgin territory. From the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains, no hostile race disputes with the Americans the possession of the soil; for it is scarcely worth while to notice the feeble resistance of the sparse tribes of Indians, who disappear like snow under the summer sun wherever the Anglo-Saxons advance. The mind loses itself in wonder when it reflects on the great destinies in store for that continent. Already there are thirty-six States in the American Union, many of them as large, some far larger, than the island of Great Britain; and vast territories still stretch towards the

west, out of which will be carved perhaps as many more states of equal size before half a century passes. Strictly speaking, the United States are only beginning to be peopled; there is a fringe of population round the eastern sea-board, but behind this border-line population is so sparse, that the country seems like a wilderness to a European traveller. Even in such old settled States as New York and Ohio, the larger part of the soil appears never to have felt the ploughshare; at all events, vast tracts are still covered with timber and brushwood; and when we go to the States west of the Mississippi, the patches of cultivation are but dots on the map. It has been stated, and we believe correctly, that if the whole area of the United States were peopled as densely as England, it would contain a population as large as that which now inhabits the globe.

But it is not only in vastness of territory that America excels; that territory is richly furnished with the elements of wealth; the major part of it yields a bountiful return to the husbandman, and nearly every production required for the use of man flourishes in some part of its domain. No country in the world ever possessed so many and such varied stores of wealth within itself, or was so independent of commerce with other parts of the earth. The mineral treasures of America are immense; its coal and iron fields, we believe, far surpass those of Europe; huge mountains of iron ore exist in the neighbourhood of the great Lakes, only needing the presence of population to furnish inexhaustible treasures; and gold and silver mines are being discovered on this side the Rocky Mountains, rivalling those of California. Then, immense avenues of water-travel pierce the country, and furnish magnificent highways for commerce; and the energy of the people has constructed a vast network of railways, exceeding thirty thousand miles in length, and equal, we believe, to the aggregate mileage existing in all the rest of the world. The flatness of the country has given great facilities for the construction of railways, and nowhere else have they

been made with so little expense—the average cost per mile, we understand, being little more than one-fourth that of our British railroads.

But it is needless to enlarge further on the material resources of America. Our business is rather with the life of the nation, than the resources of the country; but some notice of the one is needful, as illustrating and explaining much that is characteristic of the other. It aids us, for instance, in picturing that feature in the national character which most forcibly strikes a stranger, namely, their industrial activity. We English have long boasted that we were the hardest workers in the world, but our blood relations across the Atlantic have outstripped us. The fervid energy with which the Americans pursue the business of life has no parallel in Europe. The whole nation seems alive with intense eagerness, and the pursuit of wealth is the principal object on which their energy is expended; it is not, as with us, confined in the main to the trading and manufacturing classes, but permeates the whole body of society; the ambition to rise in the social scale, or, more properly speaking, to possess more of the material comforts of life, penetrates in America to the lowest stratum of society. The agricultural labourer is seldom to be found who does not aspire to be the owner of a farm, and, unless fortune is very adverse, he generally ends his life a substantial freeholder. The clerk in a store expects and usually comes to be a merchant; the journeyman printer, the editor of a newspaper; the village attorney, if he so aspire, a member of the legislature, and the New York publican, a city alderman. The rule in America is to rise in the social scale, the exception, to remain stationary; the most prominent men, whether in business or public life, have sprung in most cases from what in this country we would call the lower strata of society; and so much is this taken as a matter of course, that no one seems to think it at all remarkable that the present President of the United States (Andrew Johnson) was once a

journeyman tailor, or the previous one a rail-splitter, nor yet that the richest citizen in New York was once a penniless immigrant from Ireland.

The fact that no obstacles are placed in the way of aspiring talent, or no social disadvantages incurred in after life on account of plebeian extraction, furnishes an immense stimulus to energetic industry; and nowhere else is to be witnessed such a keen and eager competition for all the prizes which society has to offer.

In connection with this, it is worthy of mention that the Americans are an exceedingly inventive people. Much of their national prosperity is attributable to the fact that they have utilised the mechanical forces of nature to an extent never known before. A large part of the most energetic talent of the nation is employed in discovering and perfecting useful inventions, and nowhere else is the right of patent so largely claimed, or so highly valued. Many of the largest fortunes of America are the fruit of successful patents, and every year vast numbers of fresh patents are taken out. It is an important part of the national policy to encourage inventive genius; and hence the patent laws are admirably administered, and form one of the principal departments of the government. The great wealth of the Northern States is in no small degree owing to the mechanical genius of the people, for their wonderful contrivances to economise labour, enable their population to produce with a given amount of exertion a greater quantity of useful commodities than can be produced any where else. For instance, the agriculture of America is now principally performed by machinery, the land is ploughed, the seed sown, the corn reaped, the grain husked and floured all by machine power; and when you consider the unbounded choice of virgin soil the husbandman possesses, and that he only cultivates the richest portions, you can imagine how great is the amount of production relatively to the number of persons engaged in it.

We have seen no estimate of the amount of farm produce per hand in the United States, as compared with that of other countries; but we should not be surprised if it were double that of England, or quadruple that of many European states.

It need not surprise any one after this to be informed that affluence and comfort are diffused among the people of the Northern States to an extent unequalled in any part of Europe. Nothing strikes the stranger more than the absence of poverty all over the North. In our late travels, extending over three thousand miles, we do not remember to have noticed a single beggar, and among the native-born Americans it is rare to see any one whose dress betokens penury. Of course, among the crowd of European immigrants who herd in New York, and other great cities, wretchedness enough is to be found, but this wretchedness is, properly speaking, of foreign growth, and disappears as soon as they become industrious members of the American commonwealth. In this country we are accustomed to speak of the "working class" as a body quite distinct in their appearance, manners, and mode of life, from the classes above them; in our streets, our market-places, and our railway trains, the men in fustian are easily distinguishable from the men in broadcloth; they form in all parts of our community the great majority of the whole population, they seldom rise in social position, and their children reproduce their parents to the letter. But in the Northern States of America, one might say with no great deviation from the truth, that there is no "working class;" there is no part of the community whose dress, appearance and manners reveal to a stranger a low position in the social scale. As you travel in the railway cars, where all ranks mingle,—for there is usually but one class of carriages in America,—you notice but little difference in the apparel or bearing of the people, each one addresses his neighbour as a gentleman, and expects to be treated as such; and yet in their railway trains you get as fair a representation of

all orders of the community as you do in our triple class of carriages. The fact is, the horny-handed, unwashed plebeians who usually occupy our third class carriages, have no proper representatives in America; their only counterpart is to be found among the foreign immigrant population, who are the hewers of wood and drawers of water in that country. But it may be objected that it matters little whether the working class of America is native or imported, so long as there is one, and that the analogy between the old and new world holds good so long as there is an upper and lower class corresponding with what we have at home; we remark that this objection is not valid; the immigrant population in the Northern States is after all but a small proportion of the whole, probably not more than four or five millions out of twenty-five; but in this country the figures are almost reversed, the four or five millions represent the men of broadcloth, and the twenty millions the men of fustian.

We see, then, that the "working class," in the sense we use the term in England, scarcely exists among the native-born Americans; but we by no means imply that muscular labour is despised; the farmers, who are the back-bone of the Northern States, generally cultivate their own land; and the mechanical arts are largely practised by the Americans in the cities; but the drudgery of labour is shifted on to the willing shoulders of Irishmen, Germans, and other foreign immigrants; to them is confided the digging of canals, making of railways, working at forges, and whatever else occasions painful demands upon the muscle and little upon the brain; while the menial work of waiting in hotels, keeping barbers' shops, and such like, is devolved upon the unambitious negro.

In connection with the subject of labour, it is worthy of remark, that no trace of the late civil war is observable in the industrial condition of the North; nearly a million of men were disbanded by the government eighteen months ago, being about one-sixth of the entire able-bodied male population of the

North, and yet never was there a glut of labour; as fast as they were released from government service they found employment in the busy arena of Northern industry, and wherever we travelled, the same complaint reached us, that labour was scarce and dear. It was a puzzle even to the Americans how that vast army vanished; but so thoroughly has it disappeared, that a stranger travelling through the North would never dream there had been a war, judging merely from the aspect of society. Except in the city of New York we did not see a company of soldiers, and then only on one occasion, when a review of militia was held. Few things reveal so clearly the wonderful resources of the country, and the industrious habits of the people, as the sudden absorption of that vast array of armed men into peaceful pursuits. The great war was an episode in the national history half forgotten, and it strikes a stranger with surprise to find Colonels hard at work in the counting-house, and Generals busy in buying corn and cotton, quite unconscious that they are doing anything unsuited to their martial antecedents.

But the great prosperity of the Northern Americans is attributable to another cause quite as potent as their industrial energy, that is, the wide diffusion of intelligence; and this again removes us a step backwards, to the groundwork of that intelligence, namely, the national system of education. The first care of every state, of every town, of every parish, is to appropriate sufficient funds to establish schools, and provide the means of education, free of charge, for every child in the district. In the large cities, these schools are often noble buildings, containing every appliance for the well-being and comfort of the children; and the head masters are men of high intelligence and public spirit. Nothing pleased us more than the discipline of these great institutions. You enter a building in which seven or eight hundred boys are educated, and you pass from floor to floor, and witness female teachers presiding over a room-full of little urchins, and the most perfect order

and decorum prevail. The slightest word of the teacher is respected, and a bright look of intelligence beams on the faces of the children. We passed through one school, at Boston, in which seven hundred Irish boys were educated—the children of poor and ignorant immigrants from Ireland, and nothing could exceed their orderly behaviour and thorough discipline. The master informed us that he found them as intelligent and easily controlled as native-born Americans. The safety of American institutions rests, in the main, upon this admirable system of education. The children are there trained to habits of perseverance, vigorous thought, and combined action; they are all, rich and poor, placed on the same platform, for private schools for the benefit of the richer classes are not much in favour in America; and this equalisation indoctrinates them at the outset of life with democratic notions, and prevents that chafing and fretting in after life which children exclusively reared betray when forced to associate with men of a rougher type. Education may be said to be almost universal in the Northern States of America. It is considered so degrading to let children grow up untaught, that native American citizens are seldom known to do it, and the immigrant population fast imbibes the national feeling on this subject. Were this not the case, we have little doubt that education would be made compulsory, for public sentiment in America brands it as a crime against society to let children grow up in ignorance. In the city of Boston, compulsion is indeed employed, when necessary. There are officers appointed for the purpose of apprehending vagrant children, and compelling them to go to school; they are styled "truant officers," and when they find children idling in the streets, they take them to their parents, and compel them to send them to school. When the parents are incorrigible, the children are taken out of their care, and placed in Reformatory schools; indeed, in that ancient Puritan city, but little regard is shown to the rights of vice and idleness. A man found drunk

in the streets is imprisoned, and if the offence is repeated a certain number of times, he is deprived of his liberty, and placed in an asylum till he has time to regain his powers of self-control. In that stern republican city, the right of debasing oneself is denied, and the liberty of drunkenness, restrained in Massachussets, finds an asylum in monarchical Britain!

Our remarks thus far have been favourable, but truth requires us now to comment upon some features of the national character which are not subjects for praise. The European traveller, who has been accustomed to refined society in the old world, and to its multiform subjects of mental interest, is impressed rather painfully with the absence of corresponding attractions in American society. He is struck with the air of materialism that reigns everywhere; he hears a never-ending hum of dollars and cents, and social intercourse seems to be saturated with money-worship. It is not to be denied that the Americans are pre-eminently a business nation; their best talent goes into the counting-house, and the millionaire is the man most envied. They are not an avaricious people; they practise generosity on a noble scale; their donations to philanthropic objects are princely; but with all this, it is true that there is a hardness about the lines of the national face, which betokens a very intimate acquaintance with the ledger. The Americans are sadly deficient in ideality; there is little poetry in their composition; their knowledge of art is borrowed from Europe, and their higher literature is poor compared with ours. In all the loftier regions of intellectual life, there is poverty in America; mediocrity is the rule of the country; their magazines, their newspapers, their works of fiction, their current poetry are wanting in depth and refinement. The popular literature of America abounds in fallacies, in crude, ill-digested statements, in grave historical errors, in libellous remarks on persons and countries that have their origin in the ignorance or wilfulness of

the writer. There are abundant proofs on all sides that the guiding minds of the country are deficient in culture; of course little else is to be looked for in a new country, and it is easy to exaggerate this defect in the national character. Many English writers have directed attention so exclusively to those defects, that our Transatlantic cousins are justly indignant at the caricature presented to the mother-country; they feel that their solid excellences have been passed over in silence, and their superficial faults held up to ridicule. The fault is often committed of comparing the Americans as a nation with the refined circles in our own country. English travellers belonging to our better classes visit the United States, mingle with the mass of the people, and then contrast them mentally with the society they were accustomed to at home; they forget that the majority of the people they meet with belong to what in this country would be the labouring class, and it would be more proper to compare their attainments with the boorish habits and stolid ignorance of the lower strata in England than with the refinement of high-bred society; moreover, it is to be remembered that America is not wanting in high-bred society and literary refinement; few cities in the world can rival Boston that Athens of America. Names like Longfellow, Motley, Channing, Agassiz and others would confer celebrity upon any city, and nowhere is to be found more activity of intellect or higher literary polish. The New-England States are the intellectual seed-plots of America; there is a marvellous fecundity in the mental life of these little States; their religion, their political and social ideas, their literature, their commerce have overflowed North America, colouring the institutions, the policy, the modes of thought of that vast continent.

But, after making this large deduction, what we have affirmed before still remains true, that the American people as a whole have run to an excess of materialism, and have paid little heed to the maxim of the poet, "Ingenuas didicisse fidel-

iter artes emollit mores nec sinit esse feros." The lover of that country must hope that there will arise in the future a more highly trained class of leading minds, to guide the thought of the nation. In England we have a great advantage over America in possessing a leisured class; we have numbers of men who are exempted by their ample fortune and the traditions of their family from engaging in industrial pursuits, and who naturally turn to literature, art and science, or, what is better still, devote themselves to philanthropic and religious services. These men are highly esteemed in this country, and it is the aim of many of our business men to retire into that life of useful leisure.

In America, this class is much rarer; fortunes, no doubt, are often made in early life, but it is seldom that the possessor subsides into a sphere of contented enjoyment. The New York millionaire builds himself a palatial residence, stocks it with articles of taste and vertu; keeps a yacht that can cross the Atlantic, takes a six months' tour through Europe, and then sighs after the pleasures of the Exchange, and ends most probably by plunging afresh into speculation, and dissipating his fortune.

A strange restlessness possesses the Americans. The faculty of being able to enjoy wealth, is bestowed more sparingly than the faculty of acquiring it. Your ordinary American is a frequenter of Exchanges, Hotels, and places of public resort. He cares nothing for rural life; he must see his newspaper before breakfast, and read the latest telegrams from London and San Francisco before he goes to bed. His height of human happiness is to be always rubbing shoulders with fellow-citizens, and ejaculating laconic comments, not unmixed with tobacco-juice, upon the public events of the day.

Nothing is more strange to an English traveller than to see the crowds of people that throng the halls and bar-rooms of the great Hotels, and buz about like a swarm of bees to a late hour in the evening. The ancients imagined Tantalus devoured with incessant thirst—their fancy fell short of the genuine Yankee. *He* pines under an incessant hunger for news; he reads three

editions daily of his newspaper, composed almost wholly of telegraphic columns; he frequents the exchange from "morn to dewy eve"; he swallows his dinner in fifteen minutes, and then rushes off to the news-room of his hotel to read the telegrams that have arrived while his food was being bolted. He sleeps little, rises early, has a care-worn, haggard countenance, and spends sixteen hours a day in the society of business men. His life is one of incessant friction, and early decrepitude steals upon him. At the age of fifty, he looks worn out, and he soon after disappears from the view of men—you are told he has broken down, and the grave, ere long, claims him for a victim.

This sketch may appear a caricature, but it is too true of multitudes in the American cities. We may wonder that an intelligent people should so far mistake the road to happiness, but we must pause before we hold up the finger of ridicule, and ask whether our social system is much better, which permits thousands to perish annually through drunkenness and sheer animal excess.

In connection with this subject, it is worthy of remark, that the art of telegraphy has been developed to an extraordinary extent in the United States. Not only do the electric wires traverse every nook and corner of the Great Republic, but they are employed on every imaginable occasion. The courier, with his mail-bag, is almost superseded; and a large part of the letter-press of every newspaper is a compilation of telegraphic news. Every public speech, of any significance, appears all over the country the morning after it is uttered, and often on the same day; every variation of prices that occurs in New York or Chicago by noon is reported all over the country in the evening editions of the papers. Every murder, outrage, or accident, that occurs between the St. Lawrence and the Rio Grande, is industriously culled by the newsmonger, and appears next morning in the telegraphic summary of thousands of newspapers. When we were in New York, the Atlantic Cable had recently commenced working, and the morning papers usually

contained half a column of European news comprising every political or commercial incident of note, from the report of a reform meeting at Birmingham, to the loss of an Indiaman off the Cape. A copious summary of the King of Prussia's speech to his parliament appeared, the morning after its delivery, in the *New York Herald*, at a cost, it was said, of £800. .

There is no doubt, that this habit of thinking simultaneously, induced by the constant use of the telegraph, has had a marked effect on the character of the American people. It has sharpened their faculties to a preternatural degree, and given them an acuteness of mental acoustics, resembling the Red Indian of the forest. The United States have been turned into a vast whispering gallery, where every throb of the national heart is distinctly audible to the listening nation. It is impossible, when in that country, to escape the presence of a prolific national life; the rush of daily events is hummed into your ear, and a certain animal magnetism, as it were, simultaneously pervades the population of that country. It is vain to seek sylvan shades in America, "where rumours of oppression and deceit, of unsuccessful and successful war, might never reach you more." Had poor Cowper lived in Yankee-land, he would have sighed for the quiet of Olney.

The extreme fondness of the Americans for society has led in the cities to an invasion of the sanctity of domestic life, which should not be passed unnoticed. A custom prevails, happily unknown in England, for newly-married couples to reside in huge boarding-houses and in monster hotels. In the city of New York, and more or less in all the large towns, great numbers of families have no home, but are content to herd together in these vast establishments. It need scarcely be added that this mode of life is most injurious to the domestic affections, and produces too often the sad result of conjugal estrangement, and sickly unhealthy families. The mode of living in these hotels is luxurious in the extreme; and as the

cost is much less than an equal degree of indulgence in private life would involve, there are many persons of moderate incomes who surrender the holier joys of home for the selfish gratification of the *table d' hote.* The conversation and employments of these pleasure-seeking throngs are frivolous in the last degree; an empty round of calls, the silly emulation of dress and the flirtations of the drawing-room fill up the time of many of the ladies, and the unhappy children, reared in the midst of unwholesome luxury, and denied the sunshine of the domestic hearth, grow up sickly in body and dwarfed in mind. There is no worse feature, to our thinking, in American life or one more pregnant with dangers to society, than this unhealthy hotel life. But we must not jump to the conclusion that American society is all tainted with this vice, the vast rural population know little of it, and the backbone of the United States, as we before observed, is the rural population; and even in the cities there are very many who condemn it as emphatically as any Englishman can do, and the more virtuous and religious portion of society have the same appreciation of the blessedness of home life that the best of us can have. The fondness of the Americans for society has its good as well as its bad side; it is associated with much affability and kindliness of manner, they have little of that stiffness and hauteur so common in the old country; an innate sense of human equality pervades the great republic, and any man who conducts himself with decency is recognised as an equal, or at all events treated with civility. To an impartial judge it must appear that our cousins excel us in this respect; they know little and care less for that minute shading of rank so elaborately drawn amongst us; they don't understand how a man can compromise his dignity by speaking courteously to one of inferior station or fortune; they are utterly impatient of and resent as rudeness the affectation of superiority which the aristocracy, and still more the gentry, of England affect when they come in contact with American

citizens. No theme supplies the popular orator with a stronger invective against England than the exclusiveness and flunkeyism that prevail in her social system; and the impartial critic must admit that the Americans have adopted the truer test for measuring the worth and dignity of man. The Northern Americans are a marvellously democratic people; never before in history has the idea of human equality sunk so deep, or leavened so thoroughly, all the customs and feelings of a great people; there are no *classes* in America, there are no arbitrary social distinctions among the people—the clerk or mechanic feels himself virtually the equal of the millionaire, the servants you employ when travelling, such as the cabmen, guides, &c., show no servility; where they are native-born Americans, their manners are polite, but they evidently treat you as an equal, and will converse with you when invited in as easy and intelligent a style as those of your own rank do at home.

In the late war, all sorts and conditions of men mingled together in the ranks, and the commanding officer was often of humbler extraction than the privates he led. The President and the high officers of State are treated with a scanty pittance of respect. We sailed with General Grant in a river steamer for some hours, without knowing who he was, because no more attention was paid to him than if he were a common passenger. In no country but America could such a thing have happened, and it implied no disrespect to the General, than whom there is not a more popular man in America. It simply proves what we have stated already, that reverence for rank, and its satellites, toadyism and tuft-hunting, are foreign to the American soil. To our mind, the Americans are deficient in respect for dignity; it would be more pleasing to see the high officers of State treated with greater courtesy. It is distasteful to ears polite to hear the people talking about "old Abe" and "Andy Johnson;" but, after all is said and done, an element of true manliness is at the bottom of it; and this people, that knows little reverence

for the great ones of the earth, has enshrined, in its heart of hearts, a sentiment of respect and affection for every deserving brother of the family of man.

We have spoken up to this point, mainly of the social and industrial characteristics of the American people; and shall now briefly advert to subjects more political in their nature. On the occasion of our former visit to America, our review of her political institutions was the reverse of favourable. A somewhat different impression was made upon our mind by this second visit; and while the first impressions were not quite dispelled, they were sensibly modified. We attribute this to two causes. We believe, in the first place, that a very real and marked improvement has taken place in the working of these institutions in consequence of the late war; and, secondly, our attention was directed more in this second visit to those deeper sources of national prosperity which are but imperfectly represented in the political institutions of a nation.

There is no doubt that, prior to the great civil war, a frightful degree of corruption prevailed at the seat of government, and more or less through all the subordinate departments of political life. Men of virtue and honour had almost deserted the field, disgusted with the base companionship they were thrown into, and the sacrifice of independence they had to make. The authority of the law was feeble; the justiciary was time-serving, and tainted with corruption; and society was infested with knaves and scoundrels, whom no power seemed strong enough to repress. It really did seem then as though popular government had failed to secure the first necessities of civilised society —order and justice. But the late civil war brought prominently forward that vast reserve of patriotism which always existed in America; the ranks of public life were weeded of the corrupt and unprincipled crew who had fattened on the spoils of office, and men of stern character and unflinching integrity came to the front; the law became vigorous in its action, and government

was restored to its proper place. Of course it is perfectly true that all through the war corrupt and selfish men humoured the popular impulses to further their own ends, and far too many of them still exist; but it is beyond dispute that a better class of public men was called into activity by the exigencies of the crisis, and the nation awoke to the conviction that it behoved every citizen to take his share in the toils and dangers of the commonwealth. These facts were not apparent in this country during the heat and excitement of that great contest. Sympathizing as many Englishmen did with the cause of the South, or at least regarding the war as unjust, they construed in the harshest spirit the utterances of public men in the North; the arbitrary uses of power were led up to reprobation, and it was forgotten that what America suffered most from before was just the want of governmental power. But now that the heat and passion of that great struggle have passed away, it is competent to plead guilty to some errors, and recognise that the Northern States have emerged from the strife with stronger guarantees for good government than they had before. We have no wish, however, to whitewash public men in America; they have grave defects, which will endure while democracy itself endures, and human nature remains what it is. Chief among these defects is their violence in denouncing political antagonists. The heat and scramble for office in America are awful, and the din of party warfare is deafening. The vocabulary of abuse is ransacked for the purposes of political invective, and we listened to "Parson" Brownlow, the governor of Tennessee, characterising the cortege of President Johnson as "sliming snakes," before an audience which was neither shocked nor surprised at the vigorous language. American political life is sadly deficient in the element of gentlemanliness; vituperation goes hand in hand with argument, and personal diatribes season the most able political disquisitions. But, with all its coarseness, there is no lack either of ability or integrity in American public life;

though their congress falls short of the British parliament in scholarly eloquence, it probably excels it in the wide diffusion of vigorous mental life. Our representative system returns a few men of rare genius and worth; the American system is too rough and home-spun for the finest type of human mind, but it returns a high average of intellectual vigour, and admits none of the dullards that find their way into parliament through family influence and length of purse.

It is a mistake, to judge democracy in America solely by the character of its public men; its fruits are best seen in the private life of the nation—in the influence it exerts over the individual citizen. No careful observer of the Northern people can fail to perceive that the great school of politics is educating the masses of the American people as no other agency can do; every citizen there is called to think and act for himself, and is inspired by the sense of dignity that attaches to a share in the government of the nation. Political themes engage the daily thoughts and conversation of every adult American, scarcely excepting the female sex; and when you reflect how exceedingly complicated are many of the problems arising out of the late war, you will readily perceive how this employment must invigorate the mind, and train it to accurate reasoning. The United States differ from all nations in possessing an elaborately digested "Constitution," being a written instrument, of supreme authority, to which all questions are submitted, as to a court of final appeal. The constant habit of arguing all questions on constitutional grounds has given a legal turn to the national mind, and has served in no small degree to fit it for sound reasoning. The exigencies of the late crisis, and the anomalous situation of the Southern States, have rendered the application of constitutional principles extremely difficult, and have necessitated numerous attempts to amend the constitution. The controversy thus raised, travels over the widest fields of political science, and elevates the mind of the nation to a high pitch of

thought and argument. Indeed, it is hard to over-estimate the educating influence of the popular government of the Northern States; no European system exerts anything like the same influence over the masses, and we must go back to Athens or republican Rome to find an equally ardent national life. The opponents of democracy forget this; they fix their attention chiefly on the blemishes that appear on the surface, and overlook its invigorating influence on the rank and file of the nation. It is often asserted that the lower classes in this country can be better employed than in talking politics; no doubt there are other avenues of mental and moral improvement open to them, but the real question is, which are the most likely to stimulate their faculties? The majority of men will not vex their brains about questions foreign to their feelings and interest; the masses in this country will never take a lively interest in lectures on art and science; the attractions of the beer-house will be more than a match for the Mechanics' Institute; but they can take an interest in the question of peace or war, whether tobacco or beer should be taxed or not, whether the public-houses should be closed on Sunday or not, whether the children of the nation should be compelled to go to school or not, and a thousand questions of the like kind.

It is a law of nature, or rather a law of God, that the principal education the human mind receives is from the play of circumstances around it, and the necessary efforts it puts forth to adapt itself to those circumstances. When the working man is shut out from all share in political life, he fails to take an interest in it and falls back on those coarser enjoyments which his narrow circumstances furnish him with. Hence it is, we conclude, that the wide diffusion of political privileges has an elevating and invigorating effect on the masses.

We have been led into these observations almost as a necessary corollary to our delineation of democracy in the United States; but we by no means wish it to be inferred that we

advocate transplanting universal suffrage from American to British soil. Universal suffrage, to work well requires universal education, and, because education is pretty nearly universal in the Northern States, it has answered there wonderfully well; wherever education is wanting in the United States, as it is among the foreign immigrants who swarm in New York, it works badly; the municipal corruption of New York is infamous, and this is a warning to European politicians to make education and the extension of popular rights as far as possible co-ordinate. The true inference to be drawn from America, we take it, is that a wide diffusion of political rights gives strength and vitality to the national life, and is a thing to be aimed at just so fast as the growing intelligence of the people admits of it. But it proves nothing further than this, and the miserable government of New York goes to shew, on the contrary, that when an ignorant mass is invested with predominant power, it leads to anarchy, or else, as we see in Continental Europe, it ends in despotism.

We have hitherto abstained from all reference to the issues fought out in the late civil war, and the present situation and prospects of the Southern States. These subjects have been enveloped in a mist of angry controversy, and are scarcely suited even yet for dispassionate discussion; but some passing reference to them may not be without interest.—Surely the ages hurry on with greater velocity in these last times! How long it appears in mental retrospect since the great Southern confederacy stood, in full panoply, the victor in a hundred bloody fights, the expected "debutante" into the ranks of independent nations. How far off we seem from the age of Jackson and Lee, of Mason and Slidell, of Gettysburg and Vicksburg. The career of the Southern confederacy looms up to the mind like a piece of political phantasmagoria. Never in all history did so vast a conflagration expire with so few surviving embers. The collapse of the slave power is a warning to nations who put their trust

in armies, and neglect the primary laws of social well-being. The English people must confess to great mistakes in their prognostications about the result of the American war. Their principal instructors, and notably the Thunderer of Printing-house Square, have piled error upon error, fallacy upon fallacy, and forfeited all moral right to pronounce authoritatively hereafter upon American subjects. We will do well in future to distrust those blind guides, and use our verifying faculties more independently upon all political questions. The discomfiture of the South has been utter and irretrievable, and no hope is left it of ever again raising the fallen flag. It poured out its best blood to the cruel Moloch of that merciless war, it consumed its resources unsparingly, and found itself, at the close of the conflict, shattered, helpless, and hopeless. Believing as we now do that the victory of the North was best for the sake of humanity, and the future of the American people, we cannot deny the tear of pity to those brave heroic men and women who freely devoted whatever of life or strength they possessed, to what they considered their country's good. The white people of the South undoubtedly believed in the justice of their cause; the best and purest among them were most forward in sacrificing themselves for its sake; and no spectacle to our eyes is more sad than to see the loftiest patriots of North and South striking the dagger at each others' breasts; to observe the men on each side, gifted with the noblest attributes, ranging themselves in such deadly hostility, each invoking the aid of heaven, and appealing with full confidence in their cause to the impartial judgment of the world. All this speaks little for human wisdom. It speaks much for the overwhelming power of circumstances and associations, and teaches us that nations, even in modern Christendom, have their policy and principles shaped by the exigencies of the situation, rather than by considerations of justice and truth. Unhappily the conflict with the South, though finished in the field, is not ended morally; the iron of cruel

defeat has entered the soul of the conquered, and a feeling of bitterness remains which many years will not appease.

The "reconstruction" of the South, as it is termed, is a problem of extraordinary difficulty. A republican government is attempting, or rather was attempting, to rule half a continent of disaffected citizens through the instrumentality of democratic institutions; and as it is perfectly evident that the machinery of republican government is only adapted for voluntary consent, it may be imagined in what a dilemma the North is placed, with the Southern States claiming the rights which republican principles forbid them to deny, but which their dread of Southern influence tells them it is dangerous to concede. Two courses, speaking broadly, were open to the North—the first, to receive back the South, unconditionally, to all the privileges of citizenship, trusting that it would repent of its errors and not abuse its privileges; the other, to refuse it participation in the government of the nation till it gave undoubted guarantees of loyalty.

The former course was at one time in high favour, and President Johnson has been and still is its leading exponent; the latter is now the favourite policy of the North, and the present radical congress is its exponent. To us on this side the Atlantic, the policy of Thaddeus Stevens and his party appears harsh and revengeful, but it wears a somewhat different aspect when the stand-point is on American soil. You then see plainly the utter want of harmony that still exists between the North and South; you observe that the public utterances of the South shew little sign of *rapprochement* to Northern sentiments, and you feel that if the South could return its favourite representatives to Congress as of yore, the halls of the Capitol would again become the battle-ground of sectional hate. You also feel that the South, restored to self-government, would be a somewhat untrusty custodian of the liberated negro, and that, if the pressure of Northern restraint was removed, the African race would be relegated to a state of abject dependence. It is feel-

ings of this kind which have won over the mass of the more educated and thoughtful people of the North to a policy that wears the guise of harshness. They feel that, in the absence of moral accord between the people of the North and the whites of the South, there is no safety in restoring self-government to the latter unless they comply with certain conditions, which will deprive them of the power of doing mischief in the future.

These conditions have been embodied in the famous "constitutional amendment," of which we have heard so much the past twelve months. It represents in a most concise form what the majority of the Northern people believe to be indispensable conditions to the prudent admission of the Southern States to congress, and generally to their restoration to self-government.

These conditions are four in number, and are as follows:—

1. The Confederate debt is to be for ever repudiated, and the Federal for ever held sacred.

2. The negro is to be guaranteed all the civil rights appertaining to the white man.

3. In the future adjustment of Southern representation in congress, the negro is not to count unless he is admitted to the franchise.

4. A category of the leading Confederates to be declared ineligible to office, unless admitted by a two-thirds vote of congress. This category contains all those who formerly held office under the national government, but afterwards espoused the Confederate cause, and is aimed especially at the officers who are educated at West point, and afterwards commanded the Southern armies.

It will be admitted by all that the three first conditions are fair and just, and the only controversy is about the fourth, which has been made to wear an appearance of great harshness; but when it is borne in mind that the persons thereby excluded from office were the leaders in what the Northern people considered a causeless rebellion, to conquer which they expended

three hundred thousand lives, and three thousand millions of dollars, need we wonder that they affix this mild penalty of exclusion from a share in the government?—None of these men, or very few of them, suffered by confiscation or imprisonment after the war; not one political leader shed his blood on the scaffold; the most prominent chiefs in the Confederacy might travel where they liked in the North without insult; and the only limitation placed upon their right is that they be incapacitated for a seat in congress, or other national or state office, until a majority of two-thirds of congress is satisfied of their loyalty and willing to admit them.

We think that seldom have conquerors exacted less rigorous conditions of the conquered; but the Southern States, though vanquished in war, retain their stubborn spirit of independence, and have unanimously refused to pass this proposed constitutional amendment; and therefore the Congress that sits at Washington refuses to concede to them the right of representation. It is to be regretted for their own sakes that the Southern States had not made a virtue of necessity, and accepted the best terms they could get; for had they done so, the people of the North, by a large majority, would have welcomed their representatives back to the national Capitol, and done what they could to heal the breaches created by that dreadful war. But counsels prevailed that savoured of Spartan times. The South spurned rebuke, and chose political extinction rather than the shame of voluntary humiliation. Nor is this much to be wondered at; the South loved its Lees and Stonewall Jacksons as ancient Scotland revered its Wallace and Bruce, or Holland the Prince of Orange, or Switzerland William Tell. It refuses to take part in what it deems to be an act of censure on its trusted leaders; and would rather be shorn of political rights than purchase them by what it deems the loss of its honour. This unhappy dilemma is but a necessary consequence of that disastrous civil war; and while we may lament the estrangement

it has produced, we must be slow to pronounce judgment on either side. The chief misfortune of this state of things is, that it is giving ascendancy to a more vindictive party in the North, who are only too glad of the excuse offered them to trample out whatever remains of liberty in the South. This extreme party would fain see political rights withheld from the South, till its social system was disintegrated, and the black population, aided by immigration from the North, made more than a match for the old dominant class.

We had written to this point, when the startling news reached us that Congress had succeeded in passing, over the President's veto, a bill for the military government of the South, involving the abolition of the State Governments which were organised by President Johnson. The object of this bill, so far as we can judge from the confused accounts that reach us, is to compel the South not merely to assent to the terms contained in the constitutional amendment, but to comply with the superadded condition of Negro suffrage; and if we are to believe the accounts that appear in the English papers, the Radical party hope to deprive the South of all political rights, for an indefinite length of time, in order to maintain its own supremacy.

It must be admitted by all lovers of peaceful progress, that this spectacle is in the last degree sad. The legislation of Congress is laying the foundation of another Ireland, to disturb the future peace of the great Republic. There was a time when the American people would have recoiled from the thought of martial law, and have used the language of Hazael, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do such a thing?" but they have become far too familiar in these last years with the use of force, and they will have to take the consequences, in weary years of repression and penal legislation, in strange contrast with the maxims and institutions of their forefathers. We are inclined, however, to believe that the present Radical Congress has overshot the feelings of the North, and is preparing a re-action

in public sentiment which will drive its leaders from power, and restore a more conciliatory spirit to the national councils. Politicians in America, in their excessive zeal to please their party, habitually run into excesses, and the verdict of the people, from time to time, tempers and restrains the vehemence of its leaders.*

Apart from politics altogether, the prospects of the South are gloomy. The system of slavery was broken up abruptly, and no proper provision was made for a substitute; the late slave-owners are sullen, the late slaves disrespectful: the one, accustomed to command by force, knows not how to rule by persuasion; the other, accustomed to obey from fear, is too often intractable to moral suasion. From this social incompatibility arise industrial paralysis, poverty, and discontent; everything appears unhinged, and, by the hot-blooded Southerners, is attributed to the tyranny of the North. If the South were to grow prosperous, its political wounds might gradually be healed; but the same war that struck down its independence cut the nerves of its industry, at least for long years to come.

There is one other subject, of no small interest to England, which demands our notice, before concluding these remarks on the United States of America. We refer to the *Fenian organisation* among the American Irish. For some years the subject was treated with derision in this country, but the proofs now afforded, of the disaffection of large numbers of our Irish fellow-subjects, have opened the eyes of the nation to the extent of the danger.

Few things strike the English traveller in America more

* A period of some months has elapsed since the above remarks were penned, and it is but fair to admit that the government of the South under the military bill has been wonderfully successful; the first accounts as to the character of that bill were exaggerated, and its harsh provisions (for undoubtedly they were harsh) have been softened in practice by the commanding officers. Altogether the position of the South is more satisfactory than could have been anticipated a short time ago.

forcibly than the vast number of Irish collected in the cities, and their virulent hatred of England. We have seen no recent estimate of the number of Irish immigrants now settled in the United States, but we should think it is little short of three millions, or about one-half of the present population of the sister isle; and it is certainly a strange and somewhat ominous fact, that nearly the whole of that vast population is imbued with a violent dislike to this country. The Fenian organisation, contemptibly managed as it has been, appears to have enlisted the sympathies or co-operation of the great majority of the Irish American citizens; and we have heard it asserted, by Americans who had good means of judging, that had the first attempt on Canada succeeded, and the American Government not intervened, from 50,000 to 100,000 armed men, most of them trained in the American war, would, in a very short time, have crossed the St. Lawrence. It is certain that, wherever the Irish are found in any considerable number, the Fenian organisation is established, and a large proportion of the able-bodied men are enlisted in military companies. The incapacity and folly of the leaders have brought the movement into disrepute, even in America; but the tenacity with which the masses have adhered to it shows that it springs from deeply-rooted feelings, and is worthy of the most serious attention of the statesman. We have no doubt that if, unhappily, Great Britain and the United States were ever to be involved in war, the hostility of the Irish element would embitter the contest, and probably originate in the sister isle more serious commotions than any we have witnessed in our times.

Very much of the Irish antipathy to England is the creature of gross prejudice; the demagogues who inflame the ignorant masses do not scruple to utter the most barefaced falsehoods; and it would be amusing, if it were not sad, to notice the absurd and preposterous statements made to Irish meetings about the doings of England. The majority of the Irish in the United

States are quite illiterate, being drawn from the poorest class in Ireland, and intoxicated by the court paid to them in the country of their adoption. At home they were little better than paupers, and accustomed to no consideration; in America they are flattered by political demagogues, who are eager for their votes, who tell them they are the victims of British tyranny, and that they are exiled from the soil that rightfully belongs to them. The misdeeds of Strongbow are raked up, and imputed to the England of Queen Victoria, and that credulous race has its wrath excited by the story of wrongs that scarce fall within the domain of authentic history. But amid the tangled mass of ignorance, calumny, and falsehood that form the basis of Fenian declamation, there is a real and smarting sense of poverty and oppression that abides with the Irish immigrant; so vast a conflagration could not exist without some fuel, and we fear that the landlords of Ireland have to answer for a share of the bitter feelings which the immigrants carry to their adopted country. If British statesmen are wise, they will apply what remedies they can to the alienated feelings of Ireland, and they will be disposed to go beyond the bare demands of justice, and mix generosity in the cup.

The Fenian organisation in America can only be dangerous to this country when abetted by the Americans themselves; it is a weapon they can use against us with potent effect when they please, but it is harmless when they choose to discourage it. It was mortifying to the *amour propre* of a Britisher, to see how generally the American press fostered the prejudices of the Irish; it was a rare thing, during our late visit, to see American newspapers treating this country in a friendly spirit; a tone of bitterness and misrepresentation pervaded the majority of the public utterances, and the most absurd misstatements of the Irish leaders were echoed by the American press. Editors who must have known better, lent the sanction of their prestige to ignorant libellers of the British nation.

This leads us to remark, that the tone of public feeling in the

Northern States has, ever since the great civil war, been very unfriendly to England. The extent to which the Southern cause received sympathy and support in this country, and especially the depredations of the "Alabama" and her consorts, have left a feeling of great soreness on the American mind; and it is painful to one who wishes to see concord among the nations of the earth, but especially among kindred and Christian nations, to observe how alienated the public sentiment of America is from the old mother country. To some extent this feeling is natural, and need not be wondered at; but it has been carried to an excess that does not reflect credit on the generosity or Christian charity of that great nation. In this country, during the heat of the American struggle, there was always a large party who sympathised with the North; several of our ablest papers supported its cause, but it would be difficult to find a single American publication of note that does justice to this country. At public meetings, no theme is so certain to draw a round of applause as a tirade against England, and the orator who tried to defend her would have small chance of a hearing. If ever these remarks should reach the ears of American citizens, we would remind them that it is unworthy of a great people to cherish feelings of resentment, long after the cause that excited them has ceased to exist; we would remind them that it is to England they owe the habits of free speech and thought, which have made them what they are; it is to England they owe their language, their literature, their religion, their laws; and the best blood that flows in their veins is drawn, at no remote epoch, from the British homes of their ancestry; they are, in fact, the English nation settled on the other shore of the Atlantic. If it was thought, even in classical times, that the parent country should receive homage from its descendants, and Carthage thought it no derogation to its dignity to send an annual embassage of respectful greeting to Tyre, surely the Anglo-American nation need feel it no disparagement to pay some tribute of national respect

to the grand old nation from whose loins it sprang. When the Americans recover the calm use of their reason, undisturbed by the late contest, they will surely feel that the more dignified, as it is the more magnanimous, course, is to cultivate cordial relations with the old country. And we are inclined to believe that despite the contumelious language of their press, there does exist a substratum of respect, and even affection, for England, which will one day reappear. It is impossible that a people whose highest literature is drawn from this country can be insensible to our good opinion. Let us hold out the olive branch, and it will not be refused; let the master minds of both nations, instead of using their power to create breaches, do their best to repair them, and their generous efforts will be hailed by the acclaim of millions. He is no friend of England, he is no friend of America, who will seek to inflame national hatred; the days have gone by when any plausible excuse existed for such a policy. While there was a chance of the American republic being dismembered, and rival principles of national life established on American soil, there was some pretext for choosing between two alliances, where both were unattainable; but that pretext exists no longer. The American republic is one, and undivided, and we can have but one policy, either amity or enmity, with that great nation. Who can doubt what the course of wisdom is? Surely it is to banish the jealousies of the past, and cease to behold with envy the greatness of our progeny. It is vain for us, cooped up in these little isles, to aspire to cope through all ages with a nation that inhabits a continent; such rivalry is absurd; let us rather feel proud of the majestic progress of the English race under new conditions across the ocean; and let us seek to influence it for good by the ripeness of our thought, the purity of our religion, and the mild wisdom of our laws.

# THE BASIS OF POLITICAL RIGHT.

THE subject of the following remarks was suggested by the discussions on the Reform Bill of last year. These discussions travelled over a wide range of political science, but their centre of gravity, so to speak, was the principle expressed in the title of this paper, viz., the basis of political right; in other words, the fundamental groundwork of the claim to possess a share in the government of the country.

On this important question the greatest difference of opinion existed, and it may safely be alleged that the majority of our legislators had never evolved in their own minds any satisfactory solution of the problem; they hovered in every variety of posture between two opposite poles of opinion, and voted on concrete measures without any reference to a philosophical basis of abstract right. This defect of thought, which characterised Parliament, was equally discernible in the discussions of the press, and, speaking generally, there does not seem to exist in the public mind any recognised standard of judgment by which questions relating to the franchise may be tested.

Two principles, violently opposed to each other, may be clearly distinguished, viz., the extreme Tory, and the extreme Radical or Democratic. Each of these rests on a basis sufficiently intelligible, but neither is satisfactory to the large middle class of calm and moderate thinkers.

The object of this essay is to attempt to discover whether there may not be found some well-defined principle which may supply the place of a mere compromise between these rival theories.

The importance of this enquiry cannot be denied at the pre-

sent time. The question of social and political right is being sifted and analysed as it has never been before; mere traditional opinions fast go to the wall; prescription, hoary-headed, tumbles down like a rotten edifice; theories of all kinds are cast into the political mint, and out of it are coming new and unthought-of coins of acknowledged value. This agitation is not confined to England—it is rife upon the Continent—it has over-run America—it gives rise to the great questions of the future, and is one upon which philosophic statesmen must make up their minds.

It may be said that in a certain sense the late Reform Bill has settled the question of the franchise, but, undoubtedly, there will soon be a party that will try to unsettle it. The question will be incessantly before the bar of public opinion, if not before Parliament, and it behoves thinking men to see that their opinions on it are well-founded.

We propose to consider this subject, specially in reference to our own country, but the principles laid down will be applicable not less to other nations and other phases of civilisation.

We have already alluded to those poles of opinion, the ultra Tory and the ultra Radical, and a brief analysis of them will best introduce us to the equatorial line which divides, as we think, truly, between the fallacies that reside in either extreme.

The ultra Tory theory has its lineal descent from the once reputed "Divine right of Kings;" it had its birthplace in the ages when nations were regarded as the inalienable appanage of families, and when loyalty to the king was the cardinal virtue of the subject.

We need not here enquire how this now obsolete doctrine gained such a marvellous ascendancy over mankind; our object is not antiquarian research; but we may be allowed to say that, absurd as this ultra monarchical doctrine appears to us now,

it had undoubtedly certain uses, and subserved the necessities of the times to some extent, else it could never have made such headway in the world.

This theory or doctrine, at least among the more advanced nations, has now passed away; but its successor, which we may designate the aristocratic theory of government, still largely prevails, and enlists the sympathy of many cultivated intellects of our time.

The essential principles of this system, which presents itself in a great variety of forms, may be defined somewhat in this fashion:—the human race has always had, and must always have, natural leaders; wealth and rank are the prerogatives of the few, and along with them go, for the most part, education, knowledge, refinement. The possessors of these qualities form the natural aristocracy of a country, and are the class providentially designed for its government. They have leisure, which the great bulk of the community have not; they can therefore master that most difficult study, the science of government. They can acquaint themselves with the history of the past, and draw fruitful deductions for the guidance of the present; they can rise above the excitements of the hour, because their mental training has fitted them to judge calmly. They are likewise the most trustworthy guides of the destinies of a nation, for they have the principal stake in its prosperity. They are the principal possessors of its soil, its capital, and the sinews of its industry; they would be the chief sufferers by national misfortune, the chief gainers by national prosperity. Such part of them as possess ancestral renown have the most powerful stimulant to a patriotic career; the pride of birth is among the strongest motives that act on the human mind, and it should weigh on the side of national duty. Where there are not these family ties, there is at least the mental bond of sympathy with the nation's past. The educated citizen is the inheritor of the glorious traditions of his country, and the voices of the past

kindle his soul, and excite to heroic action when the occasion demands it.

But all these conditions are wanting in the common people—the sons of toil. Their hard lot makes education, in the high sense of the word, impossible. Providence has put it out of their power to master the complicated problems of government. Their narrow intelligence finds ample scope in managing their small concerns; the very littleness of their pursuits imparts a selfishness to their views, and they are as little capable of compassing the policy of an empire, as an infant is of comprehending the planetary system. They are full of prejudices, social antagonisms, national antipathies, which only need an outlet to produce chaos. They cannot understand that beautiful balance of rival forces which underlies the working of social laws; their clumsy hands would mar the fine mechanism of high politics, and degrade the councils of a nation to the level of a select vestry, or a trade's union. Further, the lower class in a community have but little stake in a country. They own—at least in a country like ours—but little property; they live mostly by the labour of their hands, and they can easily carry that labour to a foreign market. The facilities of emigration now-a-days are so great, that the manual labour class can move in large masses to the new countries of the world, whenever the conditions of life in the parent country become distasteful. It is therefore unreasonable to expect, from such a fluctuating element, a matured opinion on public affairs; people who are ready on a turn of the labour market to transfer their allegiance to the United States, are not to be put on a level with the stable classes whose interests are bound up irrevocably in the weal of the realm.

These are the views, in substance, which sustain the aristocratic or oligarchical theory of government. But, in addition to these, there are two powerful motives, unavowed in argument, but potent in their influence upon the possessors of power.

The first of these is, respect for established custom, or prescription.

With many persons, this is the most valid reason for the retention of any ancient institution. That it has long existed, is to them a proof that it ought to exist; and where government has long been in the hands of an oligarchy, it seems to them just and righteous that it should remain so. The conservative instinct is deeply rooted in human nature, and, for obvious reasons, greatly predominates over the revolutionary; and thus it happens, that any national institution which has the sanction of antiquity enlists powerful allies in its support. Nor does it follow that these allies are drawn solely from the favoured class of the community, they are often taken from the opposite section; the sentiment of respect for established usage penetrating far beyond those who are benefited by the usage.

We may fairly consider then that the influence of prescription has told strongly in favour of the aristocratic theory of government, for, in the course of nature, that system preceded the democratic, and gained the sanction of established custom.

The other motive referred to is the less noble one of selfishness. The possessors of power come to love it for its own sake; they find that it gives them some personal advantages. It is often made to contribute indirectly to their material gain; and where this is not the case, it adds, at all events, to their importance in the community.

We find that all oligarchical governments have clung to power, with a tenacity that mere considerations of public policy would not account for; and, underneath the flood of arguments used in support of their claims, might easily be discovered the strong current of personal interest. This feature showed itself more palpably in connection with the first Reform Bill than the second. The abuses of our parliamentary system before 1832 were so glaring, that no impartial mind, it might now be thought, would have failed to deplore them, but the Tory party,

as a body, strenuously resisted all change. They contended that political monopolies should be preserved, mainly because vested interests were involved in them; and thus the good of the community was subordinated to the corrupt interests of the few. This line of argument was not employed in the discussions on the second Reform Bill. Public sentiment would not tolerate it now, but still no one who knows human nature will deny, that the selfish element had its place in the resistance offered by many to the extension of the franchise.

We do not note this fact with the view of casting obloquy on the Tory party—self is unhappily the centre round which the average human mind revolves; and, when a limited class in the community monopolise the power, it is entirely in accordance with human nature, that, among the motives which induce them to retain it, there should operate that of self-interest.

We now turn to the opposite theory, which we may designate the ultra Radical, or democratic system of political right. This theory is more pretentious than the other. It appeals less to expediency, and more to abstract right; indeed, it rests its claims upon *à priori* grounds alleged to be involved in the very constitution of man. It appeals to a speculative type of mind rather than to a practical; it disdains to reason on the ground of induction, but bases its claims on alleged axioms, which mankind, we are told, intuitively assent to. According to this theory, man is contemplated as a being possessed of certain inalienable rights; these include, not only the well-known articles of the American Declaration of Independence, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," but likewise an imprescriptible right to equality in political power with all his fellow-men.

No disqualification is admitted except crime or insanity—all adult male inhabitants of a country have a divine right to share equally in its government, and the decision of all political

questions ought to rest with the majority told by the head. This, stripped of all its accessories, is undoubtedly the doctrine of the ultra democratic school, and it wears a specious air of equity which commends it to a benevolent but shallow philosophy.

It has its origin undoubtedly in some fundamental truths regarding the constitution of man. It is the glory of the Christian religion that it has brought to light the essential brotherhood of mankind, and the vital elements of equality that underlie all earthly distinctions. The democratic theory is indebted to the Great Teacher for its primary conception of human equality, but it applies to human nature *in esse*, what was only affirmed of human nature *in posse*. It lays down as a practical obligation, incumbent on humanity at all times, what is only a seminal principle, from which are to develop gradually the germs of a new life. Your ultra-democrat looks round the world, and sees absolute injustice wherever there is political inequality. The classes or individuals in any country who have not the franchise are the victims of fraud and violence. They are as clearly deprived of their due as if they were denied the right of marriage, or the education of their family. The only existing system, on a large scale, that fully embodies the views of this school is that of the United States of America, where every adult male, not specially disqualified, has an exactly equal share of elective power. Every nation that approximates to that system is on the high road to perfection, and the further any people differs from it, the greater the guilt that rests on its head.

We do not mean to assert that the extreme view we have here set forth finds favour with any large class of men in such a country as ours, but we refer to it as the extreme pole of opinion in this direction; and that it is not a mere question of speculation, the utterances of the Reform League have acquainted us.

It is probable, however, that in many minds it lurks in the nature of a hazy, indistinct conception, probably never analysed, or followed to its legitimate conclusions, but yet often enough giving rise to the declamatory appeals of Demagogues.

We have now mapped out, in a somewhat rough and cursory manner, the territory of opinion embraced in the aristocratic and democratic theories of government. We will turn briefly to an analysis of the elements of truth and falsehood that mingle in both.

In the aristocratic theory, the cardinal qualification for the possession of power is *fitness*—the question is made to hinge mainly upon that. When its advocates have proved that the upper class is, individually and collectively, more fit for political power than the lower, they think they have gained the cause. Now we are willing to allow that this element is one of no small importance. If the decision of difficult questions is to be left to two tribunals, one of them intelligent and another ignorant, surely no one will hesitate which to choose. If, for instance, an exceedingly complicated legal question had to be tried, and the choice was between a high court of justiciary, and an ordinary jury of unskilled men, we would of course prefer the trained judges.

In all cases where mental culture is the only requisite for judging rightly, of course it will follow that educated men are incomparably superior to uneducated, and all matters, scientific or literary, properly fall under the scope of this remark. But it is otherwise with the art of government in regard to which mental culture by no means holds the same place.

The government of a nation reaches down to all the wants, feelings, and interests of the humblest citizen. It does not deal alone with the abstract domain of knowledge, it comes in contact with the multiform wants of human beings; it has to decide equitably between strongly antagonistic forces; it has

to apportion fairly, irksome and burdensome duties; it has to erect barriers against the selfishness and injustice of classes and individuals; it has, in short, to settle questions in which personal interests constantly come up, and where no authoritative code of law exists to determine difficult problems, but where appeal must be made to erring human minds, refracting more or less the light of reason through the prejudiced medium of self-interest.

Indeed, it is a great and palpable error to regard the province of government as purely intellectual, and demanding nothing but a cultivated intelligence; it is co-extensive with human nature, involving the moral as well as the intellectual, and is interwoven alike with human prejudices and human passions.

It follows from the constitution of human nature that we cannot get a high and serene court of political arbitrament, whose judgment will equitably decide all cases, and give satisfaction to all suitors. The ruling class will, from the very nature of the case, come oftentimes into rude collision with the sympathies and wants of their less favoured fellow citizens. They will legislate too often in ignorance of the actual circumstances of the case, and devise laws with reference to ideal standards, rather than the complicated problems of real life.

We hold it an undoubted axiom, that even if a nation could be clearly divided into two sections, the one educated and intelligent, and the other uneducated and ignorant, the former would not be capable of legislating with perfect equity, nor yet with perfect wisdom, for the latter. The mist of self-interest would repeatedly blind its perceptions, and it would lay down principles for the inferior caste which it would at once repudiate if applied to itself.

We appeal to history in defence of this proposition. We doubt if there has ever been an epoch in the world where a government, lodged in the hands of an educated oligarchy, exer-

cised its power with a due and equitable regard for the interests of the unenfranchised class.

We have in the ancient Greek republics as fair a sample as antiquity affords of a well-marked division between the educated and the uneducated. In Athens the unenfranchised democracy was singularly intelligent, but where do we hear of its dispensing a just and benign government, either to its subject territories, or its home population of serfs? We find that all the ancient oligarchies, the Roman patricians included, regarded their political power as a personal privilege, and treated the inferior caste as their lawful subjects, throwing on them the menial service of the commonwealth.

We find the same features exhibited in a somewhat milder degree in the Italian and Dutch oligarchical republics of the middle ages. Christianity had then tempered the tyrannical maxims of antiquity, but class interest was still strong enough to lead to grievous oppression.

Coming down to modern times, we have a sample of the narrowing, cramping influence of limited class-government in the English parliamentary system prior to the Reform Bill of 1832. No doubt that system returned a pretty high average of educated legislators, and it probably represented the most cultivated intellects of the nation; and yet how much it neglected some of the primary duties of a government, such as the education of the masses, and their elevation in the scale of civilization. Looking back upon the *régime* of Walpole, and Pitt, and Castlereagh, it is vain to deny that, amid much personal excellence and genuine patriotism, there was, in the main, a studied attention to the interests of the upper classes; and doctrines of popular right, now universally received, were regarded as little short of treasonable.

The last and most notable instance of class-government that occurs to us, is that of the slave states of America, prior to the late civil war. The line of education there coincided very nearly

with the line of political power. The dominant class, viz., the slave-owners, had nearly all the education, and all the power. The subject class was ignorant and enslaved. Probably no oligarchy were better educated than the southern planters; they had all the advantages of wealth and leisure, and being of Anglo-Saxon descent, had thus the treasures of Anglo-Saxon thought at their service; but the cramping influence of self-interest blinded them on great social questions, and, unable to read the signs of the times, they committed political suicide.

We do not refer to them in the language of contumely—they were the victims of a false system, and honestly carried out what they believed to be right; but the point is, whether a class can be trusted with the determination of what is right, when the subject is another class who have no voice in the question.

We think no more need be said in favour of our maxim, that personal fitness is not the sole condition for holding political power; all history corroborates the verdict.

Are we then to seek in the democratic doctrine of inalienable right a solution of the problem? By no means. The great law of historical induction, which proved class-government to be faulty, even where the ruling class was individually the most capable in the community, proves likewise, beyond dispute, that ultra-democratic theories of government are alike impracticable and inexpedient, unless among highly educated communities.

We look in vain through history for any successful experiment of this method of government, on a large scale, till we come to the great republic of North America; and the main reason why we find it successful there is, that the masses of the people had, for the first time in history, attained to a high level of education and intelligence. And, it may be added, that they had, by a long anterior training of semi-independence in their colonial state, gradually learned the arts of self-government.

The example of North America is being gradually reproduced in the other colonial offshoots of England; and the

continent of Europe also affords now some successful examples of purely democratic republics; as, for instance, several of the cantons of Switzerland; but it may be boldly asserted, that general enlightenment had in all cases paved the way for the reign of democracy.

We have one dreadful example in history of the premature development of democratic institutions, an example so appalling that it should suffice to warn mankind for all time of the danger of a sudden transition from absolutism to extreme popular rights. We need scarcely say that we allude to the Great French Revolution. We see there the spectacle of a nation, stifled by ages of grinding tyranny, suddenly launched into the possession of full political power, with no intervening process of preparation. We find exactly the development that might be expected. In the first place, many noble and generous sentiments, and many noble and generous leaders. But soon the dense ignorance of the masses gives scope to the intrigues of brutal demagogues. All the teaching of history is disregarded, all laws human and divine, moral and economical, are set at defiance, and the misery that follows, of necessity begets a savage cruelty.

The nation, drunk with blood and horror, exhibits a spectacle more worthy of demons than of men, and liberty, at last despairing of self-control, flings itself into the arms of a grim military despotism.

The French Revolution teaches two lessons—the dangerous and demoralising influence of despotic government, for it was under the Grand Monarque that the seeds of '93 were sown; and, secondly, the absurdity of supposing that a community steeped in ignorance, and utterly strange to self-government, can make a successful experiment with democratic institutions.

The lamentable excesses of democracy in France, threw back, for fifty years, the growth of liberal principles, and gave immense vitality to the aristocratic theory of government.

Democracy and misgovernment came to be synonymous in the minds of most people; and the religious sentiment, which had been shocked at the atheism of the French republic, lent its powerful weight to the Tory theory of government.

Indeed, it is curious to observe, in passing, that the doctrines of Christianity, which at the beginning of this century gave their sanction almost without reserve to the oligarchical principles of government, now employ their weapons at least as powerfully on the democratic side.

It may be said by some, that the French Revolution is a solecism in history, and does not fairly settle the question of the universal applicability of democratic principles to the government of mankind. We grant that to some extent it is a solecism, but we maintain that like results would have followed elsewhere, if democratic institutions had been as suddenly introduced into a soil as ill-prepared for them. If Jack Cade or Wat Tyler, in England, had attained the power of Robespierre, either of them would have antedated the excesses of Robespierre.

The reason why we have few examples in history of the premature development of democratic government, is just because of the essential weakness of the principle amid uneducated peoples. Its attempts to lift its head were usually abortive, because the conservative instincts of society combined against it.

To a large extent it may be said, that the very reason why pure democracy failed to establish itself in history, was just because there was no healthful scope for it. Actual governments, to a great extent, and viewed in the mass, represent the actual wants of mankind; and the reason why monarchical and aristocratic systems prevailed so long, was mainly because, with all their faults, they were the best suited to the existing development of mankind. We feel convinced that, had ultra-democratic principles been at any period of history capable of

beneficial application to government, the opportunity would have been afforded them for manifestation.

If any further arguments are required to refute the ultra-democratic theory of government, we will leave the soil of Europe, and travel towards the East,—the chosen home of absolutism,—and there, we venture to say, it will be easy to effect a *reductio ad absurdum* of this high-sounding theory. If it be true that all communities of men have an indefeasible right to govern themselves under a system of universal suffrage; and if it be true that no disqualification, whether of ignorance, or barbarism, or conquest, bars that right, but that it exists as an eternal law, which it is sinful to resist and righteous to uphold: then it must follow that a pure democracy is the only just government of India, as it is of the United States; it follows that we are tyrants in barring that right, and that our first duty to the unhappy serfs of India is to collect their free suffrages, and decamp if they require us.

We think but few even of the most extreme Radicals would advocate such a theory, but most undoubtedly the arguments they oftentimes use could have no other logical development if applied to India. It seems almost childish to reason upon such a supposition, or to point out the absurdity of supposing that a population could govern itself under any system of equal rights, where not one person in a thousand knows more of government than an infant does of the calculus; where the only idea of government that has existed in the minds of men for thousands of years is that of supreme, unquestioned power, derived from some source as far above their comprehension as heaven transcends the earth; where native despotisms of the most cruel and barbarous character are at present the only possible alternative of our mild sway; and where Suttee and Dacoitee would rear their heads and flourish afresh, as soon as the firm hand of European justice was withdrawn.

We think the case of India a crucial test of the weakness of

the ultra-democratic theory; it breaks down there so utterly that it is obviously false. Our moral right to govern India is that we are exclusively fit, and the natives at present absolutely unfit. If it were a matter of comparative fitness, and the scale inclined but slightly to our side, the case would be different, and it might become a grave question whether it would not be better for India to be left to a somewhat inferior native government, rather than to a somewhat superior foreign one; and we admit that the time may come when this question should be seriously discussed; but it has not yet arrived, nor will it arrive till the millions of India are educated as only the thousands have yet been. To our mind the existing British government of India is as clearly defensible on broad grounds of justice and morality as are the free institutions of the United States. We do not affirm this of the means by which the possession of that government was acquired; but, dealing with accomplished facts, we say that our government is indisputably the best that India can now have, and therefore it is the most equitable.

No one will be so obtuse as to suppose from this that we place it on a level with an intelligent democracy in respect of intrinsic goodness. We freely grant that the institutions of America or England, or any constitutional European government, are immensely in advance of those of India, but better cannot be provided for it at present, and till they can, our institutions are both just and beneficent.

But zealots and doctrinaires are hard to convince, and even India may not suffice to demolish their theories. There are some who can see nothing but the injustice of our conquest, and would not be afraid, in obedience to their theories, to leave the native population to construct governments of their own. We would ask such philosophers, on what principle they would govern the Cannibal Islands, or rather, on what grounds they would forbid a civilised race, who had the power, to restrain cannibalism. This illustration sounds ludicrous, but it tests

the principle. There are populations so degraded, that rapine, slavery, and cannibalism are the normal conditions of their life. Are we, upon these abstract theories of the rights of man, to stand by and cry, non-intervention?

Surely few persons would deny that a civilised race, who had the power, had also a moral right to put down these barbarities and govern the population on absolute principles, till at least some rudiments of civilisation had been engrafted on it. It is when the extremes of civilisation meet that the best illustrations can be found of many political theories; and we think these extreme views of indefeasible political right, are reduced to absurdity when applied to cases like those we have described. It is found then wholly unavoidable, even from a democratic point of view, to take into account various considerations besides abstract right. Fitness and adaptation for the exercise of power are conditions that determine the question in a preponderant degree, and if they do so in these extreme cases, they certainly cannot be disregarded in milder cases.

We repeat that we consider the cardinal error of this school to be, that it conceives the rights of human beings as *in esse* rather than *in posse;* that is, it holds them as being all equally existent, instead of being potentially so. When a nation is educated, morally and intellectually, to such a pitch that the entire mass of the people is competent to judge soundly of political questions, there is no choice as to the best system of government—a pure democracy is undoubtedly the best. This should be the ideal which we keep before our eyes, and towards which successive generations should aspire; but the progress towards that goal must not be premature, if good fruits are expected to follow — the diffusion of political rights must correspond in some degree with the diffusion of moral and mental training, and the fabric of democracy will be most beautiful and enduring when it results from a long and steady growth in the elements of self-culture.

Premature attempts at democracy must, in the nature of things, provoke reactions. So we see in modern France; universal suffrage there has extinguished constitutional government, and erected a system of absolutism. It may be said that that government is the best that France can bear in its present state of development; but it must be allowed that universal suffrage makes a somewhat poor appearance when it points to Louis Napoleon as its prophet.

However we view this question, it will be found that we cannot consider democratic theories apart from education and general political fitness; these theories become tenable, just as we emerge from popular ignorance; and they retreat into the domain of abstract conceptions, when we take our stand among the dark ages of history, or visit the still benighted races of the globe.

We look upon the relation which civilised and educated races bear to barbarous and ignorant ones, as not dissimilar to that which adult persons bear to children. Just as it is right that the grown persons in a community should manage their children according to their own views of propriety, and irrespective of the wishes of the little ones; so is it right that civilised communities should legislate for such barbarous races as may happen, in the course of human affairs, to be placed under their control. On this ground we justify our right to make laws for the aboriginal races of Australia, New Zealand, and the Cape; and the same plea holds good for the United States in respect of the red Indians, or at least such portions of them as are settled within the national domain.

It may be said that this illustration, as well as some previous ones which we have given, is not relevant to the question at issue, for we are considering the grounds upon which individuals in a community may claim political rights, and not the claims of one race or people as against another. But the subjects are essentially interwoven. If it be true that man, as man, is en-

titled to equal political power with every other adult male in the community, it follows, of course, that large masses of population cannot be deprived of the suffrage without injustice, simply because they belong to an inferior, an ignorant, or a conquered race. The ultra-democrat must, on his principles, make no distinction of classes or races. He must grant to the Maories of New Zealand, who live on British soil, to the Hottentots of the Cape, and the Zulus of Natal, the same privileges as to British colonists.

This is the ground taken up, we believe, by the extreme Radical party in America, who have recently succeeded in passing an Act of Congress in favour of universal negro suffrage. Up till lately, and indeed, we believe, at the present time, some of the Northern States refuse electoral rights to the negro; it is now sought, by an amendment to the constitution, to over-ride the wishes of these States, and to secure to all male inhabitants of the United States the right of equal citizenship, independent of race or colour. We are not aware whether the red Indians, resident within the national domain, are exempted from the provisions of this Act. Hitherto, they have not been allowed the right of suffrage in any State, so far as we know; but we believe there are some politicians in America, so enamoured of their sweeping theories, that they would regard any exception on the ground of race as rank injustice.

We do not complain here of the unwisdom of the course pursued by the dominant party in America; it may be the best policy under existing circumstances to lay the broadest platform of political right; indeed, we will go so far as to admit that no great danger will accrue to the commonwealth so long as the great majority of the people are educated and of European extraction; but what we do complain of is, that this policy is advocated by some on grounds of abstract right, and independent of circumstances altogether.

The fact is, the views held by statesmen and politicians on

these subjects are formed from their own experience and that of the community in which they dwell; and the people of the United States are as unfit to judge of the best way of governing India, as the people of this country are of the admission of negroes in America to the franchise.

We may safely conclude that if ever the United States is placed in the same position as this country is with its foreign settlements among uncivilised races,—such as those of India, New Zealand, &c.,—it will change its opinions about indefeasible political right; should it happen in the course of time that it annexes Mexico, we shall be surprised if it relegates the affairs of that anarchical country to its barbarous inhabitants on the footing of manhood suffrage; and should it ever become mistress of the Antilles, we shall be equally surprised if it does not exercise some gentle paternal restraint over their sable inhabitants.

We will even go further and allege, that should the present irruption of Chinese into California increase, as it may do, till they exceed in number the American inhabitants of that State, it will be found very difficult to carry out any Act of Congress whereby these Celestials would be able to elect the legislature and make laws for the irrepressible Yankee. If ever such a day arrives, we may be sure that some ingenious scheme will be found for evading the conclusion that flows from the premises now laid down in the United States. It will not be tolerated, under any form of government, that a civilised race should be over-run, and its government virtually transferred to barbarous aliens, from no political necessity, but simply in obedience to abstract philosophical theories of human equality. The common sense of mankind would rebel against such revolting consequences, and these theories would break down in practice in America, as they have already done in the rest of the world.

One further argument we will adduce, in proof of the fallacy of the ultra-democratic theory of political right. Let us admit for a moment that democratic government and equal manhood

suffrage are the sacred appointment of the Almighty, and are removed from the pale of controversy by what Carlyle would call the eternal and immutable constitution of things, how comes it that human wisdom must step in at the very threshold and determine at what age the Divine right begins? What right have human pedants to fix political adolescence at twenty-one? Does any immutable law disqualify all below that charmed line? Why not say twenty, as well as twenty-one; or why not eighteen or sixteen? If education, intelligence, general fitness for the business of life are to count for nothing, as some demagogues teach, on what plea can the youth of twenty be denied the right which his elder brother possesses? That this argument is not purely hypothetical, we are advised by an agitation started some time ago in America, in favour of lowering the age of political majority. Not content with universal manhood suffrage, there are some who complain of the arbitrary limitation of age. They see no reason why the precocious American youth should wait till twenty-one before acquiring his inalienable birthright. The fact is, the same essential principles which are pleaded even in democratic communities in favour of fixing a line of political manhood, are equally applicable to larger restrictions of political right. It is said, with reason and justice, that some line must be fixed between boyhood and manhood for the full attainment of civil and political rights; and this line has been drawn among the Anglo-Saxon races at twenty-one, because it has been found, on the whole, that justice is best subserved by this arrangement. We grant the truth of this, but how is the decision arrived at? Just by the exercise of common sense; just by observing that about that time of life men for the most part become fairly competent for discharging the duties of life; and that, balancing one thing with another, it is better for the interests of human society to draw the line at twenty-one than at twenty-five or at eighteen. No one alleges that an essential question of right is concerned in the matter. In some communities the line might as properly

be drawn at twenty as in others at twenty-five, all depending upon the earliness of development and the customs of the country.

We contend that precisely similar methods of reasoning must determine the claims of masses of men to exercise the franchise. A civilised community may rightfully use its common sense and deny the claim to barbarous aliens who are living in its midst, on the very proper ground that they have not reached the maturity of political manhood; it may properly treat them as political minors, for they are, to all intents and purposes, as unfit for the franchise as youths below twenty-one. On the same grounds, we may also deny the suffrage to bodies of our own fellow-countrymen, who are so steeped in ignorance as to be mere infants in political education. We can see no more injustice in drawing a line at the age of twenty-one, than in drawing a line, say, of reading and writing as a test of fitness, or of household occupancy, or of any other test which fairly discriminates, upon the average, between the competent and the incompetent. We affirm, that the same great laws of observation and experience go to settle both questions, and in either case it is absurd to appeal to inalienable and indefeasible right.

We might further illustrate this view by referring to the agitation now prevalent, more or less, both in England and America, in favour of female suffrage. We believe there are extremists in the latter country who argue this question on the same *á priori* grounds as they do manhood suffrage. It is with them no question of expediency, it is one of simple absolute right; no matter what the consequences, all married or single women are entitled to the same rights as men. We merely allude to this subject to show in what inextricable difficulties people land themselves, when once they surrender themselves to the high-flown doctrine of indefeasible political right. They will find that they must descend from one platform to another, till at last their position is so outrageously at war with the com-

mon sense of mankind, that it ceases to be matter for serious discussion.

We think we have now reached that point in our argument where we may recapitulate some elementary conclusions to which we have come. We have examined the aristocratic theory of government, and have found that its assumption of fitness as the sole qualification for political power is not defensible; and we have next examined the ultra-democratic theory, and found that its assumption of inalienable right is equally, if not even more, unfounded. Can we not discover some formula, which expresses a sounder creed than either of these systems? We think we can; and we make bold to say that it is nothing more abstruse than this—*that political rights should be extended as far as may be done without danger to the public welfare.*

This may seem to some persons, on the first blush, rather a lame conclusion, and ill-adapted to guide us out of the intricacies of this perplexing subject; but we will try to prove its superiority to the rival schemes we have investigated.

And, firstly, we must show wherein it differs from the aristocratic principle, which affirms personal fitness to be the exclusive qualification. It may appear, upon a superficial survey, to be much the same as it, for it may be said that, if we restrict the franchise to those who are educated and intelligent, we best avoid danger to the public weal. It differs from it, however, in a very material degree; it is much more liberal and expansive, and far better adapted to keep pace with the progress of a nation, and to stimulate that progress. As a matter of course it assures political rights to all the educated portion of a community, and in that respect it is abreast of the aristocratic theory; but it goes beyond it, and says, "We must absorb into the constituent body as much of the nation's life as we can, without endangering the cause of order and good government; we must not stop at a rigidly marked and exclusive line that

may shut out the vast majority of our fellow-countrymen, if we have good reason to believe that a part of them may safely be associated with us in the management of public affairs. We are willing to absorb into the constituent body no small amount even of political ignorance, so long as the preponderant power of intelligence renders it harmless. We are desirous to give as free expression as possible in the national councils to all the wants of all classes of the people, and will only stop in the process of enfranchisement when we see that greater danger will accrue to the state from further extension than from remaining where we are." According to this theory which we are propounding, the right of the franchise is not viewed solely in relation to good government; it is also treated as a benefit to the individual; it is esteemed a great means of popular education, and we hold this to be a most important branch of our argument.

In a community like ours, where great masses of the people scarcely possess the elements of education, where the refining influence of literature and science is unknown to millions, and where a hard and ceaseless struggle for bare existence chills the higher faculties of a large section of the humbler classes, it is easy to see that a share in political power acts as a strong mental stimulant and a powerful educator. The elector, newly admitted to the privilege, finds himself at once a person of some importance in the community. His vote is solicited by gentlemen of education and social position; he listens to able statements of opinion; he is, in a manner, compelled to think and discuss public questions, it may be, for the first time in his life; and so, for a while, he is lifted out of the narrow groove of cankering daily care; an element of nobleness is imparted to a life that was once sordid and narrow, and hopes and aspirations spring up, that had no soil to flourish in before.

Any one who has travelled in a democratic community, such as that of the United States, must have been struck with the

eager interest in public questions which the great masses of the people take, even those whose lives are spent in physical drudgery. We do not say that this is the highest mode of education —far from it—but it is one adapted to a large class of mankind who are denied the leisure or the means of cultivating their minds in any other way.

We conceive therefore that the politician, who is a philanthropist as well, should look with a somewhat favourable eye on the diffusion of political rights beyond those classes who are entitled to them on the score of education.

It may be retorted on us that when masses of ignorant people are enfranchised they only abuse the boon, and, instead of being educated thereby, are corrupted by bribery or debased by intimidation. No doubt these dangers exist, and are a grave reason for gradual progress in political enfranchisement, but they are no reason for shutting out the inferior classes altogether and for ever. The proper use of the franchise can only be learned gradually; habits of political thought and independence of expression take time to grow; and it may be the work of a generation to convert ignorant masses of electors into intelligent and self-respecting citizens. But it is an important thing to give the opportunity for this educating process, to cast the leaven into the stagnant mass, and set it seething and fermenting. The great object of all political systems should be, the greatest good of the greatest number; in other words, the advancement of the true welfare and happiness of the whole community; and surely, with this object in view, we should seek to draw within the elevating sphere of political life as large a number of our fellow-countrymen as we safely can.

Politics, rightly understood, should go hand in hand with religion; they should enter the domain of conscience, and secure its highest sanctions for their work. That fundamental principle of the Christian religion in regard to social life,—viz., to do to others as we would that they should do to us,—is a key that

should unlock some of the difficulties of the problem we are discussing. Of course we freely admit that different persons, starting from this maxim, will come to very different conclusions; and we are far from saying that it is the "Open Sesame" to every enigma; but we do say, that if its light were steadily allowed to fall on all political questions it would greatly simplify them, and the area of contending opinions would be circumscribed not a little.

We come, then, to the conclusion that the domain of political privilege should overlap somewhat the area of intelligence, and embrace some portion of the less favoured class; and the principle we apply to limit this extension is the relation it bears to the *general welfare of the community.* But we readily admit that this is a most grave limitation. We look upon it as no imaginary line, ready to recede at the first summons to the dead level of manhood suffrage; we think it is one behind which a high-minded and conscientious politician may honestly take his stand as a genuine conservative. We think that all revolutionary changes in political power, whereby large masses of ignorant voters are suddenly enfranchised, are clearly condemned by this limiting principle. We believe it can be shown incontrovertibly that the swamping of an intelligent ruling class, by the sudden irruption of a majority of uneducated voters, would be an evil to the whole community, and would paralyse for a time the progress of a nation. We have already dealt with this question at some length in examining the ultra-democratic theory; and we proved, or attempted to prove, that great peril would result to any community from having the preponderant mass of its electors unfit for their duties. Where a nation is unhappily so circumstanced that but a small minority are fairly educated, it would, in our opinion, be a most dangerous experiment to adopt democratic government. Even in our country, where political education is becoming tolerably extended, we believe that great evils would result from "universal suf-

frage." We should, even in the interests of philanthropy, contemplate with extreme alarm any sudden Americanising of our institutions; the absorption of new elements into the political fabric must be gradual, if we are to expect happy results. A certain amount of comparative ignorance and comparative unfitness may be assimilated by the constituent body without danger to the community, and with great benefit to the enfranchised class. Nay, more, the admixture may give a healthier life to the whole, by causing the fundamental bases of society to be vigorously re-examined, and flaws and weak points removed; but the infusion must not be too great—the foreign matter introduced must not overtask the digestive powers of the old constituent body, else there is apt to be a schism, and a rude jarring of incongruous elements.

Let us illustrate these principles by a reference to our last Reform Bill. The qualification for the franchise previous to it was high enough to exclude nearly all the uneducated portion of the nation from political power, and it was low enough probably to include the greater part of the intelligence and education of the nation. Still, there was growing up below the line a very considerable amount of political intelligence, and large numbers of persons felt that they were arbitrarily and unjustly excluded. It became, therefore, desirable, in the interests of the whole community, to lower the line, and take in, as far as possible, all the education and political fitness that lay below it. This could not be done without at the same time drawing into the net no small amount of ignorance and personal unfitness. Still, the plain duty of the old electoral body, according to our theory, was to enlarge their boundaries by a wide act of enfranchisement, and why? Because, in the first place, there had grown up below the electoral line a large mass of political fitness, and, secondly, because they could, without danger, admit along with this a tolerable amount of political ignorance. It was no plea for shutting out the intelligent artisans that they could not be

admitted without a mass of ignorance entering along with them, unless it could be shown that the ignorance was so vast in dimensions as to threaten the welfare of the community. The question was simply one of degree. Grant that the borough franchise may safely be dropped from £10 to £8, because the people occupying such houses are mostly educated men, may it not be dropped to £6, on the plea that there is still a considerable element of education to be found? Or to household suffrage, on the plea that though a large amount of incompetence may thereby be enfranchised, yet there remains a preponderating force of intelligence to render it innocuous? We are not discussing here the merit or demerit of the precise line of enfranchisement taken by the last Reform Bill; we are laying down the principles by which the wisdom of any measure of enfranchisement is to be tried. People of course will always differ as to what constitutes education, and also as to what proportion of ignorance can be safely incorporated into the political fabric; but still the discussion is not a little narrowed when the franchise is looked upon as a right and a boon that may be claimed, and which ought to be conferred as widely as is safe in the interests of the whole community.

If we may venture to express any opinion at all on the prudence of the extensive enfranchisement bestowed by the last Reform Bill, we would say that it was fully as large as our theory would justify. It descended to a level where education was perhaps rather the exception than the rule. We refer to the lowest class of householders; and certain it is that a very considerable mass of those enfranchised in the large boroughs scarcely possessed even the elements of education, such as reading and writing, nor any rational acquaintance with political questions. We should have thought, in accordance with the views we have laid down, that it might have been wiser to have halted for a few years at some intermediate point, before leaping to the low level of household suffrage. It would have allowed

time for the old electoral body to incorporate with itself a moderate amount of political crudeness, before subjecting it to another strain on its digestive powers. As it is, we have infused into it all at once a large mass of new material, much of it in a very crude state, and I think we may congratulate ourselves that the results thus far have been so satisfactory. We may hope that if the first few years are passed over in quietness, the unintelligent element that at present exists in our electoral body will become leavened with political knowledge, and that the cause of good government will suffer no peril, while a far larger body of our fellow-citizens are subjected to the educating influence of political life. We do not wish it to appear for a moment that we look with suspicion or dislike upon the late Reform Bill. According to the principles we have laid down, a considerable measure of reform was evidently called for, and we are by no means positive that the measure adopted was too large; we merely regard it as somewhat hazardous, in the existing state of education in this country. We are, however, clear on this point, that any further extension of the franchise would be highly imprudent, till a much larger degree of education and political enlightenment prevail throughout the country.

The dangers that beset civilised nations in modern times no longer spring from the principle of aristocracy, but from that of democracy. The tendency is to rush with undue precipitation from the one form of government to the other; to ascribe all the evils of the past to narrow class-government, and predict a Utopia in the future, when peoples shall freely govern themselves. We fear that experience will show that each form of government has its besetting sins, and if democracy is established before education and political intelligence have fitted the people for it, as great evils will result as have flowed in the past from the domination of oligarchies.

Whatever blunders democracy may commit, there can be no

doubt that it is the goal to which the world is hasting. Its premature development may occasion reactions, but the steady drift of public opinion in favour of equal rights is not to be denied; and, to our thinking, it is only a question of time till republican forms of government are adopted by all civilised nations. It is the part of the statesman and philanthropist to see that this progress is solid and sure; that the march of intelligence and virtue keeps pace with the march of liberty and right; and that in our haste to reap the harvest of the future, we do not trample on the ripe fruits of the past. We prefer that development of liberty which has its roots in history, and is based on human experience, to that which is born in revolutions and disdains affinity with the past; we have no love for those political theories which despise the great and the good who have gone before, and count their wisdom as nothing because it does not square with their new-cut patterns. Superstitious regard for the past is an evil, but reverence for the past is a wholesome instinct, wisely implanted by the Creator in the human breast, and modern progress must cherish that sentiment if it wishes to be beautiful and good.

# REFLECTIONS ON THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.

**The following reflections were written in October 1870, during the crisis of the Franco-German war. On one point the writer would now hesitate to endorse the policy recommended here, viz., the adoption of a system of home defence, based upon that of Prussia. He feels it to be an open question whether the stimulus so given to warlike tendencies would not counterbalance its obvious advantages in a military point of view.**

WHAT an age has passed since midsummer of this year, when profound repose reigned throughout Europe! How it startles us to think that as recently as July the French Premier declared the political horizon to be unclouded, and our own Foreign Secretary, Lord Granville, on assuming the seals of office, was informed that never within our time was the diplomacy of Europe more quiescent. An ordinary observer then looking abroad on the surface of European politics would have assigned to France the leadership of Continental Europe; her Emperor, the master, as it was supposed, of 600,000 bayonets, was the cynosure of the world. Replaced more firmly on his throne by eight millions of suffrages, his nod, like that of Jupiter, shook the solid earth. The chief business of statesmen and publicists was to divine his secret thoughts; for did he not command that irresistible force which it took united Europe twenty years of bloodshed to bring under control! The military primacy of Europe had long been yielded to the great nation, and the name of Napoleon sounded with a martial cadence that no other name had rung with since the time of Julius Cæsar. After France came Russia, Prussia, and Austria, but Sadowa had placed Austria somewhat in the second rank, and the star of Hohenzollern outshone the waning glory of Hapsburg. Prussia was acknowledged to be the most rising power on the Continent;

but Germany was still divided, and it was by no means clear that a conflict with its great Gallican rival would not once more rend it asunder, as in the days of the first Napoleon, and open the heart of Europe to a second outburst of French aggression. So often had the Teutonic race been worsted in conflict with the fiery Frank, that the most far-sighted men failed to forecast the issue of this war. The sympathies of the British public went with Germany, but the best they hoped was that her patriotism would in the long run repel the French invasion, and vindicate her independence at a fearful cost. Who could have dreamt that in one short month from the first passage of arms the Emperor Napoleon with 100,000 men would be made prisoners of war, and that in two months from the outbreak of hostilities Paris would be besieged so closely that no communication could be held with the outer world!—Paris the metropolis of luxury, the queen of modern cities—Paris, that boasted itself the capital of civilization, and might justly claim to be the *chef-d'œuvre* of human handiwork! Who that has gazed at that fairy city on the banks of the Seine but must feel stunned at the thought of its palaces being riddled with shot and shell, its enchanting parks and gardens wasted, and its gay population struggling against the invader in utter despair! The whole scene passes before our vision like a piece of phantasmagoria, and we rub our eyes and ask ourselves if it is all a dream.

But this terrible stroke that has fallen upon the beautiful land of France is no dream, it is a fearful retribution for many crimes; it is the evolution of those moral laws by which the Allwise Ruler makes His hand felt among the nations of men, and those whose ear is attuned to the melodies of the moral universe will have no difficulty in unravelling some at least of the causes that have brought about this mighty overthrow.

All nations have their ideals, and in proportion to the nobleness of the ideal will be the elevation of the national character. The ideal of France has been martial glory. That land stood

alone in Christendom in regarding the soldier as the emblem of civilization; other countries were fast coming to look upon war as a great calamity, and only to be justified by strong moral reasons, but France persisted in throwing a halo of renown about the trade of the soldier, and needed no apology to its conscience for any war that promised glory and material gain. I do not dispute that large interests in France were in favour of peace. The ignorant peasantry and the opulent commercial classes were united in deprecating a warlike policy, but their opposition rested too much upon mere selfish grounds; it was not sufficiently purified by moral considerations. There was not in France a tender conscience asking is this or that right in the sight of God? Is this or that right as between brethren of mankind? The great figure of France interposed with a blinding spell, and threw a halo of illusions around all questions of national policy. No nation of modern times has been less able to judge impartially between itself and others; none has been so much the victim of an egotistic self-regard. The cause of this lies deep. In France intellect and religion have been divorced, as they have never been before in any so-called Christian country. Paris has become the head quarters of a rank sensuous civilization, a civilization that mocked at purity, truth, humility, and self-denial, and made the gratification of self the sum of earthly good. The schools of philosophy, emanating from that centre, were marked by a common disbelief in the supernatural and a common contempt for all forms of earnest religious faith. The life of the capital was the reflex of its philosophy. The imperial court was tainted with the worst vices of a corrupt civilization. The evil example of an unrighteous life on the throne spread a poisonous miasma through the nation. Right and wrong became inverted to a deplorable extent, and the great landmarks of morality were lost sight of, as they have only been in the darkest periods of human history. We do not affirm that other great cities are exempt from the

vices that infest Paris, but there is this difference, that they have flaunted themselves there as they do nowhere else. The national conscience has been asleep, and impurity, mendacity and fashionable wickedness of all kinds have presided in high places, and fairly choked any feeble remonstrances that virtue may have offered. If any one thinks this too hard, let him look at the French popular literature or drama, and let him say if there has, ever since the corrupt days of Rome, been a more degrading species of amusement. Has there ever been so much talent employed in turning into ridicule all that is noble in man, and in fishing from the muddy pool of animalism every slimy creature that wallows there. Amid this foul literature the higher virtues of a nation must inevitably decay. The true ideal of national greatness is no longer sought in the Christian civilization of a happy people, but in the meretricious and Pagan appetite for military glory. The absence of free political life intensified this evil. The lively mercurial temper of the French had no occupation in the wholesome labour of developing the institutions of the nation. The leaden system of imperialism crushed down its political life, and the fresh breezes of free discussion were not allowed to breathe into it their healthy invigorating influence. The corrupt imperial system is justly chargeable with many of the evils that afflict France, but that system itself was only rendered possible by the lamentable want of public virtue.

When we turn to Germany we are struck with the contrast. The Teutonic ideal of national greatness is something quite different from the Celtic. It is the moral, intellectual, and political development of the nation; there is no lust of foreign conquest, but a fervent patriotism for Fatherland, and a readiness to make sacrifices in its defence that speaks of a national virtue of the highest order. We were scarcely aware, till this war brought it to light, of the prodigious vitality of the German race; it has suddenly stepped into the front as the most power-

ful, most cultivated, and most patriotic member of the continental family of nations, and the military primacy of Europe must indubitably be ceded to it.

We trace back the present greatness of Germany to the sufferings of the first Napoleonic wars. In these dark times for the Teutonic race, when French armies trampled down the Fatherland, and oceans of German blood were spilt in fighting the thankless battles of Napoleon no less than fighting against him, there arose in the people a passionate desire for unity and security against foreign aggression. When the victorious campaigns of 1813-14 freed Germany from French invasion, the opportunity was afforded for gratifying these desires, but the interests of peoples were sacrificed to those of princes, and Germany remained divided and weak against aggression. But the instinctive desire for unity remained deeply implanted in the national breast, and Prussia became the impersonation of that feeling and the hope of intelligent Germans. For many long years she devoted herself, with marvellous assiduity, to the social improvement of her people and the perfecting of a national system of defence the most formidable the world ever saw. The reforms of Stein and Hardenberg early in the century gave the Prussian peasantry large proprietary rights in the soil and established a class of sturdy freemen, the backbone of any country; the education of the people was pursued with such zeal that the whole population was reached by the schoolmaster, and the other North German states, copying the example of Prussia, adopted the same admirable system. The whole of North Germany, long before the present or even the Austrian war, had become the most highly educated and probably the most temperate and orderly country in Europe; it was rapidly growing in all the solid elements of national greatness while France was as rapidly declining. Then came the Austrian war, when Prussia threw aside reserve and claimed the leadership of Germany; public opinion in this country blamed her at the time for her aggressive

policy, and perhaps upon a mere technical view of the case she took up doubtful ground, but viewed broadly, on the interest of the German race, her policy was essentially patriotic; it was indispensable for the unification of Germany, as well as its political development, that the dual system of government should cease, and the alien rule of Austria come to an end. It was impossible that Germany should ever constitute itself as a free nationality under the ægis of that heterogeneous empire, and it was impossible that German policy should ever be truly national, when it could be hampered and overruled by an empire mainly Slavonic and of lower civilization. The Austro-German alliance was utterly unnatural, and must needs come to an end, and to Count Bismark belongs the credit of seizing the happy moment for cutting the Gordian knot. Against the wishes of his own people he struck the decisive blow at Austria, and laid that proud empire in the dust in the course of a few weeks. From this moment the unity of the German race was practically ensured. Prussia established the North German Confederation, in which she was paramount, and the South German States, left nominally independent, were drawn by the inevitable force of circumstances closer and closer to their only possible protector in the too probable event of French aggression.

Meanwhile these changes were viewed in France with intense jealousy and ill-will. That vainest of nations had long arrogated the power of intervening in the concerns of her neighbours; she looked upon them as satellites, who might humbly revolve round the grand orb of France, but she could brook no rivalry, and it was intolerable to see Germany constituting itself into a mighty nation of forty millions without asking her sanction. Ever since Sadowa, it has been clear to all thoughtful observers that nothing but a miracle could avert a struggle between the two great races of Western Europe. The language of the French press and the tone of her politicians have shown such bitter hatred of Prussia, that but one result was possible, and it

is vain now to attempt to throw the blame upon the Emperor, and seek to excuse France. If ever there was a war into which France entered enthusiastically it was this one, and the Emperor, as he truly said, followed but did not lead his people, and the sequel is before the world. The false ideal which the French nation has worshipped, the ideal of military glory, has conducted it to unspeakable humiliation, while the nobler ideal that Germany has aimed at, that of high individual as well as national development, has conducted it to military supremacy, and placed the copestone on the great temple of her national unity.

We take it for granted that henceforth there will be but one German nation, and that the petty distinctions which still exist will soon disappear. We rejoice to think that the heart of Europe will be occupied by a great Teutonic kingdom, closely allied to ourselves in blood, traditions, and sympathies, and strong enough to curb the mercurial Frank on the one side and the semi-barbarous Muscovite on the other. A strong united Germany is the keystone of the European arch, and the best hope of the future peace and prosperity of the Continent. The balance of power could never be well secured while there lay a mass of weak principalities between the compact realm of France on the west and giant Russia on the east, and while the alliance of these petty states was governed by dynastic considerations, and shifted from side to side as suited the whims of their Courts. Because Germany was weak and divided, it was needful for England to uphold Belgium and Holland as bulwarks against France; but this necessity exists no longer. The mighty German Colossus, like Samson when his locks grew, has discovered its huge strength; it has felled France to the ground with a single blow of its mailed hand, and England is released from the duty of standing sentinel over Belgium lest it fall a victim to its grasping neighbour.

Let any one who doubts this reflect what would have been

the situation of England to-day had the French armies met with the same success which has crowned their adversaries. Suppose King William had been a prisoner in France and Berlin besieged by a Gallican host, would our Consols have stood at 92? would our Ministers have been grouse shooting in the Highlands, and our Volunteers airing their uniforms on an occasional gala day? We suspect the state of Europe would be very different from what it is. We imagine that trepidation would have been felt at many European capitals, and anxious councils would have been held by divers Cabinets to devise means of stemming the tide of French conquest. We much fear Belgium and Holland would not have slept so tranquilly as they do now, and we hope we are not uncharitable when we surmise that the French wolf would have discovered that the Belgian lamb was muddying the water. The Anglo-Belgian alliance would have become something more serious than a piece of parchment, and our brave soldiers might have had to fight many fresh Waterloos. The present tranquil aspect of Europe speaks volumes as to the comparative estimate formed of French and German aggressiveness, and we maintain that in the predominance of Germany Europe has a far better guarantee of solid peace than in that of its rival. Of course it may be said that Germany has not been tested in its new rôle of a conquering power, and that the intoxicating effect of victory will make it overbearing in its future policy. We do not despise this danger; we admit that too much success is not good for any nation. Human nature is liable, all the world over, to be carried away by martial glory, but we believe there is no race in Europe less likely to yield to the seduction than the German. All history shows this, and the high culture now reached by that nation is a tolerable guarantee against this frenzy. The composition of the German army is another powerful guarantee; it represents the whole nation; it is, therefore, educated far beyond any other army in Europe, and is not to be drawn into

unjust wars of aggression merely to satisfy the ambition of princes. Nothing except an overwhelming sense of national duty can make a war popular in Germany, when such terrible sacrifices are imposed affecting the very pith and marrow of the nation. In all the other European countries the armies are mainly professional; they are separated from the life of the nation, their interests and aspirations are different, their *raison d'être* is to fight, and their rulers are often tempted to find them occupation in order to purchase their goodwill. This is eminently true of the French army, which has always been a dangerous weapon in the hands of an unscrupulous government. But it is wholly different in Germany; there is no class of professional soldiers there, and the young men who are obliged to serve their term nearly all look forward to civil life as their proper avocation, and merely comply with the demands of military service as a duty of patriotism.

We think these are cogent reasons for expecting a pacific Germany when the present war is brought to a close, but there are others of a more material kind which remain to be stated. The German race, though probably the strongest in Europe if all its scattered branches were grouped together, as it numbers, all told, about fifty millions, is still effectually counterbalanced by the combined strength of Russia and France. We omit Austria from the category, as her composite character and strong German infusion practically neutralise her in a struggle of nationalities; but it is very obvious that if German policy should become grasping and offensive, a natural alliance would spring up between the sixty millions of Russia and the forty millions of France which would effectually paralyse Teutonic ambition. It is well known that the old Muskovite feeling is not favourable to Germany; its sympathies in this war go with France, and though the enlightened sovereign of Russia has kept the feeling of his people in check and observed a strict neutrality, there is no doubt the attitude of Russia would change if Ger-

many should unhappily after this become a menace to neighbouring states. At present Germany might afford to brave the united hostility of France and Russia, for the latter power is comparatively unarmed, but its resources are prodigious, and no one can doubt that if it became necessary to bridle the Fatherland's ambition, the two great Powers which lie on each side of it would be adequate to the task. It is a mistake to suppose that the present defeat of France will ultimately weaken its force in any great degree, or reduce it from a rank of a first to a second class power: even though it has to part with that corner of its territory which meets the Rhine, and contains a million or two of souls, it will still retain thirty-seven millions of inhabitants and immense natural resources, and the probability is that a much sounder system of government will arise out of the ashes of this convulsion, and that the national mind will be directed towards a higher and purer civilization. If I am right in this belief, France will not lose its high place in Europe, it will still be respected, and the respect paid will be more cordial than the feelings it has inspired of late years. Between a reconstructed France on the one side, and the empire of Russia on the other, it is not possible for Germany to run riot. We believe the statesmen of the Fatherland fully recognise this, and would shrink with dismay from the idea of becoming the bullies of Europe. We credit them with a far nobler ambition, that of perfecting in peace the moral and national welfare of their people. If the history of Europe has taught anything, it has shown that when nations abandon themselves to the lust of conquest they betray their best interests, and evoke a Nemesis that takes vengeance for their sins. Look how the rapacious Spain of Charles the Fifth sank into an effete and third rate power—look how Napoleonic France has three times within this century brought an enemy to the gates of Paris—look how the conquering Turk, who was once the terror of Christendom, now lives by the sufferance of his civilised neighbours. The German

people have not read these lessons in vain. They know well that an arrogant policy will gradually estrange the sympathies of Europe, and they also know that in the long run moral forces are stronger than material. We say *in the long run*, for at first the preponderance of material power may give the victory. But moral forces are subtler far. Their influence is more searching and durable, and in the long run they control material force. Any power in Europe will find this to its cost, as France now finds it, in her friendless and pitiable isolation.

Let it not be supposed from these remarks that we exult in the anguish of France—far from it. The heart bleeds at her suffering; the misery brought upon the innocent victims of war is harrowing to contemplate, and our humanity longs to see an end put to this cruel havoc; but, looking beyond the present, we discover the seeds of new life sown in the furrows made by the ploughshare of war; the vices that have ruined the nation will be pointed to as awful warnings by their future moralists, and men of integrity and virtue will come to the front; the nation will no longer submit to be governed by persons who outrage decorum, and know no principle but self-aggrandisement. Whatever form of government it ultimately assumes, the intellect and conscience of the nation will, more than they have done for long, mould its policy and direct its aspirations. The fine genius of the French will be confined to its legitimate field, and will add its valuable quota to the sum of European civilisation. We are far from despairing of the future of France. She may have to go through much suffering yet; in fact it is too probable that internal convulsions will follow the close of this war, for there are fearful dregs of past folly to be washed away, but we believe she will emerge purified and strengthened, and be a better and nobler people fifty years hence than she is now.

But has England no lessons to learn from this war? Surely, if she has eyes to see, the book lies open before her. She has

long been told that Germany was stealing marches upon her; but here is proof positive. Here is a national uprising which displays an amount of patriotism, a degree of intelligence, and a power of organisation of which she hardly dreamed before. Not to speak of the prodigious military force, with which we have nothing worthy of comparison, there is evidently a universal willingness to sacrifice for Fatherland, a sinking of all selfish interests, and a determination of everyone to do his duty, which could only spring out of a soil rich in the virtue of self-denial. Germany has clearly made prodigious strides since the days of the first Napoleon, and we fear that our country has not kept pace with her. We have among our upper classes too much of that selfish luxury which has been the bane of France, and we have at the base of our social fabric a hideous mass of ignorance and destitution. In any crisis which our country may have to encounter we would be encumbered, not aided, by a large proportion of our population, too ignorant to know anything of the issues at stake, and too helpless to add anything to the national energy. In the great cities of Germany there are no such crowds of ragged, squalid objects as abound in our English towns. There are not millions of people the slaves of beastly intemperance; a sober comfort and respectability distinguish the working-classes, and though the country as a whole cannot be called opulent, there is far less poverty than in England. The greatness of Prussia is largely owing to her universal and compulsory system of education, and her military power to the equally universal and compulsory service of the whole able-bodied population in the ranks. The former of these will be adopted, it is hoped, in our country as already foreshadowed by the last education bill; the second, forced upon Prussia by her dangerous situation, our happier position enables us in some degree to dispense with; still it must now be admitted that if it be right to guard against attack, the only mode of rendering this island impregnable is by adopting some modification of the

Prussian system. In Prussia all the able-bodied youth are obliged to serve in the army, most of them from twenty to twenty-three years of age, then they pass into the army reserve till twenty-seven, after which they enter the Landwehr till thirty-two, and finally pass into the Landsturm till forty-five, though we believe this last class is becoming almost obsolete. There is in time of peace little further claim upon the men after their twenty-third year, when they leave the ranks; but in time of war the army reserve is first called out, and in times of emergency the landwehr, and for home defence in the last resort, the landsturm. I believe that of the huge German host now in France, comparatively few are drawn from the landwehr, and thus the great bulk of the soldiers must be under twenty-seven. No doubt some modification of this severe system will be practicable after Germany is re-organised. The area will be so much larger that an equal number of men will be provided, after shortening the period of service, and very likely the term of three years' active service will be reduced to two. It is not found in Germany as it is with our regular army in this country, that military service demoralises the soldiers or unfits them for civil life afterwards. The mixture of men of all ranks keeps up a gentlemanly tone, and the active, muscular, exercise of camp life improves the *physique* and sends forth stronger men into the walks of industry. There are many obvious advantages from such a system if applied to this country; it would vastly improve the *physique* of our town population, and lessen that deterioration which is painfully visible in our manufacturing towns. It would amalgamate all classes in a way that would elevate the lower, and tone down the pride of the higher; those huge gaps that are the bane of our social system would be bridged over, if all alike had to share in the duty of protecting their country, and were brought to know each other by personal intercourse. The selfish, luxurious habits of too many of our upper classes would find an antidote in the rigour of discipline,

and men who had learned the lesson of self-denial at an early stage of their life would be more likely to follow manly occupations afterwards.

These are the advantages which would flow from such a military system as the Prussian when applied to this country; but against them are to be placed the evil of encouraging the growth of a warlike spirit among the people, and probably of a meddlesome policy on the part of the government. No one who admits the dictates of our religion can view war as other than a dire necessity—a horrible discord in the Gospel song of "peace and goodwill to men," and no true patriot can wish to see this country plunged anew into endless continental wars simply to satisfy the etiquette of diplomacy or straighten the ever-changing lines of that *ignis fatuus*—the balance of power. It is only as the best system of home defence that some modification of the Prussian system should be thought of; it would be an indispensable condition of such a force that it should never be called upon to serve beyond the British Isles; it should in no sense strengthen the aggressive power of the country, but place its home defence on such a basis as would render it very unlikely it should ever be put to the test. Neither would the rigour of the Prussian system be requisite; it would probably be found sufficient to require a certain portion of the youth to serve for one year, say from 20 to 21, and then be liable to be called out, only in case of need for four years more, say till 25. Suppose that one-half the able-bodied youth of this country who reach the age of 20 were ballotted for the militia, it would yield for Great Britain alone probably 100,000 as the quota for each year, and so there would be 500,000 liable for service when the five years had been completed, barring the usual deduction for deaths and other casualties. Any such system as this, thoroughly worked out, would make this country unassailable, and would probably confer advantages on those who were put through the training more than sufficient to

counterbalance the disadvantages. There would also be after the system had been in use for a generation, several millions of men accustomed to arms, and ready to aid in repelling invasion if need should arise. With such a system the regular army would only be required for foreign service, and might be kept at a minimum strength, and thereby much demoralisation be avoided. Unhappily, our present system, from the corrupting idleness of barrack life, too often degrades the soldier. Add to this that the army is largely drawn from the lowest class of the people, and it will evidently have a tendency to deteriorate from the mere association of the soldiers with each other. All this might and ought to be avoided under a well-devised militia or landwehr system; the depots should be established in rural places, away from the temptations of towns, and the time and energy of the youth so engrossed with active employment that idleness would not tempt them to any kind of dissipation. We believe, under wise and fatherly management, such a training might be made a school of virtue rather than of vice.

These rough outlines need no special knowledge of military matters, and can be judged of by any intelligent observer of what is passing on the Continent: it seems only in some such way as this that we can have a simple, intelligible, and comprehensive system of home defence, for our present lumbering arrangements, which are as complex as they are unworkable, will only collapse in case of need.

It is only fair, however, in estimating the comparative progress of Germany and England, to bear in mind that we are much in advance of our Teutonic brethren in the development of free political life; in that grand department of national education we are clearly ahead of Germany. Though Prussia and the other German states possess a kind of constitutional government, they are still ruled to a large extent autocratically; the government of Prussia may be styled a paternal despotism, tem-

pered by parliament. The struggles between these two Powers, prior to the Austrian war, were hot and frequent, and resembled not a little our parliamentary contests with Charles I., though conducted of course with more moderation and good temper. The original bone of contention was the time of service in the army, the court insisting on three years, and the representatives of the people on two; it was carried by the former in spite of parliamentary protest, and it appears now as though the King and Bismarck were right, and accordingly their popularity is not impaired by the unconstitutional part they played some years ago. But the time will return when these and other questions will emerge, and the former parliamentary struggles will be repeated. The immense prestige which the royal family has gained from their leadership during this war, will give them for a time the privilege of controlling in a high degree the politics of Germany; but it is clear that this must come to an end. So highly cultivated a people must ere long become the arbiters of their destiny as fully as we are in this country, and there may be some friction in the wheels of state while this process is being accomplished. It is doubtful whether Germany has not been a gainer up to the present time by the strength of the executive, for she had to undergo an ordeal requiring long and arduous preparation, and it is questionable whether a popular government would have dared to enforce the stern discipline required; but matters will be changed when this war is over. A united Germany will not need to bestow such pains on military preparation, she will turn her attention to civil pursuits and civil questions, and the intellect of the people will assert its just rights in settling them; it is to be hoped that the wisdom of the reigning house will shun constitutional struggles, and that German self-government will perfect itself peacefully as our own has done in times past. Parliamentary government in the future will be a safeguard against a warlike policy. A people who manage their own affairs are less apt to plunge into war than a monarch or an

aristocracy who act as their delegates. They have not that morbid sense of national honour by which military leaders are distinguished; but they have a keen sense of the actual evils of war, and are less likely to rush into it from mere petty affronts. It is lamentable to think that the peace of Europe is so much in the hands of two or three individuals, and we cannot but feel it will rest on a surer foundation when the great nations of Christendom have all in their own safe keeping the perilous arbitrament of peace or war.

One other leading advantage England has over Germany is her political culture. She draws her knowledge from a much wider area; her insular position, her vast commerce and her colonial empire, bringing her into close relations with a large part of the globe. No other European nation has spread her arms so widely, or gathered so much practical knowledge of human affairs. England comes closely into contact with every phase of civilisation, from the Maories of New-Zealand, and the Hindoos of India, to the great Anglo-Saxon races in North America. She has had the training of a vast colonial family, some of whom are already shooting into vigorous manhood. Their ripest wisdom returns to the mother country, which excels every other state in Europe in the number of her skilled and educated statesmen. In the same way her press discusses a far larger variety of subjects than come within the scope of Continental newspapers. The press of this country is at the head of the institution all the world over, and the ability developed in that department of her national life is unexampled. Her political literature is of the highest order, and neither Germany nor France has anything approaching it; neither do the populations of those countries comprehend as that of England does, the many and complicated questions arising out of the free life of a nation. For this and other reasons the moral influence of Great Britain stands high, and though she makes no pretensions to cope with the armies of the Continent, her influence is far from contemptible. There is a

thorough masterly handling, and in the main a conscientious one, of international questions by the leading organs of public opinion in England, which goes far to lead Continental opinion. The relation in which England stands to the Continent enables her to use moral influence in a commanding degree, for she is beyond all suspicion of territorial covetousness in Europe. She has no frontier lines to amend, no English-speaking race to protect, no troublesome army to employ. Her vast colonial empire is sufficient to absorb her energies, and she stands to the nations of Europe as a friendly monitor rather than a jealous rival. The possession of this unique position demands from her special duties; she ought to be the councillor of peace and moderation, the willing mediator between disputants, but her offices should rarely pass beyond friendly advice. The threat of intervention is a dangerous implement to use, and could not be trusted even to the wisest of governments. Threats should not be made without the power and intention of acting upon them, if necessary, and it is undignified in a great nation to take a position from which it may have soon to retreat. At one time the foreign policy of England was marked by this weakness, but latterly a more reserved and much wiser policy has prevailed, and she has avoided meddling with questions that did not properly belong to her. Many taunts have been addressed to her because she did not avert this war by a resolution declared at the outset to oppose the aggressor, but those who throw out such taunts can hardly have reflected upon the obscure character of the proceedings that led to the war, and the difficulty of fastening clear undoubted blame upon one alone of the disputants. It is monstrous to suppose that this country, with all its complicated interests and strong sympathies, is to be allowed to rush into war on the construction of a telegram or the gesture of an ambassador, and so throw its whole weight on the side of France or Germany as the turn of a straw shall decide. Such policy belongs to the days when nations

were mere puppets in the hands of their rulers, but is an anachronism when the millions think and feel for themselves. Wars usually break out at the last upon some petty technical question, so minute and often so obscure that it is most difficult for a foreigner to say where the right or wrong exactly lies. No doubt, behind the technical question is usually some deep-seated cause, such as the French jealousy of German unity, and on that account we believe that France was the real cause of the present war, and justly incurs its odium; but it is a different thing to pronounce a moral judgment and to shape the action of a government in particular cases. The former is done upon a broad view of the question, but the latter must rest upon clear documentary data, and it may easily enough happen that the real aggressor contrives by a clever trick to throw the onus of breaking the peace upon the innocent party. So it was in the war between France and Austria in 1859. France and Sardinia were notoriously preparing for this war, and Austria was evidently drawn into it against her wish, but the onus of crossing the river Sesia, the frontier line, fell upon her, as she was induced to do so in order to paralyse the preparations evidently going on against her. Had England then, in her office of constable, committed herself to attack the aggressor, she might have been tricked into a war with Austria, the party who was in reality attacked. I give this as an answer to those German papers which blame England for permitting this war. They say had she declared to France that she would join Germany, the war would not have occurred. But would it have been just to act thus, and prejudge the merits of the case? Would not this have been cutting the Gordion knot of the Hohenzollern dispute in a way that would have done injustice to France? Would it not have stirred up far more ill blood in France than it would have procured us good will in Germany, and at best it would only have staved off the war for a little, for the rankling feeling would soon have found vent through some other channel. The

efforts of our government to avert the war were most earnest and incessant from the first moment that irritation arose through the Hohenzollern candidature, and no one can read the correspondence that passed between our Foreign Office and the Cabinets of Paris and Berlin without feeling that England carried to the utmost lengths compatible with neutrality the office of a peacemaker. The great crime of this European war does not lie at her door, and so she can at some happier hour the better act the part of mediator.

But how much better would it be if wars could be prevented altogether by a system of international arbitration. We well know the thought is a dream, but looking at the gory battle fields of France, and the frivolous pretexts under which they have been fought, we ask, can no means be devised which will at least throw some obstacle in the way of hastily drawing the sword and give exasperated nations time to cool down and count the cost before taking the fatal plunge? Had it been a well-established custom in Europe to submit national disputes or even points of etiquette, to an international court, this war would scarcely have arisen. What was mainly wanted was time to get at the truth of conflicting statements, and permit the eighty millions of people involved to understand the question at issue. Consider what a cloud of irritating falsehoods flew about Europe during those few days of hot discussion that preceded the war. First we had the announcement of the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern for the throne of Spain, and almost immediately the haughty demand of the Duke de Grammont for his withdrawal under pain of war with Prussia. It was then taken for granted before there was time to prove it that Prussia had instigated the candidature, though it was afterwards disavowed by her; then followed the scene at Ems between the King of Prussia and Benedetti, which the telegraph industriously misrepresented to Europe. All Germany and England were told that Benedetti had purposely insulted the King as he walked on the

parade, and the anger of Germany flamed up to fever heat at the announcement; but in France the people were told just the opposite, and were led to believe that their ambassador was ignominiously dismissed by the King. The truth came out afterwards, when the mischief was done, and it was found that neither King nor ambassador had the least notion of insulting each other, but the lie got the start of the truth, and we suspect that to this day it has a lodgment in millions of breasts. Then there was the withdrawal of Hohenzollern, which ought to have terminated the dispute; but the French government, in an evil hour, took umbrage at an alleged telegraphic despatch which they imagined Count Bismarck had sent through Germany, and which conveyed, as they thought, an insult to Benedetti. To this day I have never seen the existence of this despatch proved, and it was denied by the Prussian government, but it urged the French government to insist on harder terms from Prussia to show that they had gained a diplomatic victory. They asked the King to guarantee the renunciation of the candidature, and declared war when he refused to do so. But, be it observed, the reason given by Ollivier to the Chamber for drawing the swordwas this mythical telegram issued by Bismarck, and whose existence is now denied.

To increase the diplomatic muddle, be it remembered that the English Cabinet was firing a volley of telegraphic despatches to both governments adjuring them to settle the question peaceably, and suggesting every conceivable mode of solving the difficulty without wounding the *amour propre* of either, and all this was condensed into the short space of a week! How is it possible for statesmen, much less for peoples, to steer their course calmly amid such excitement and fearful tension of the brain! and how lamentable to think that a few garbled telegrams may stir up passions which can only be slaked in blood! I have often thought of late that the telegraph, with all its advantages to humanity, has some terrible drawbacks: it heightens

national quarrels by bringing the disputants into speaking distance of each other, and carrying back and forward with speed of lightning their angry retorts. The Wise man has said "let not the sun go down upon your wrath," but the telegraph gives no time for fretful potentates to sleep off their irritation and compose their shattered nerves. By night and by day its hard incisive messages sting the poor wearied brain, and it is no wonder if the bile gets deranged after seven days' sleepless excitement, and some foolish slip is made which fatally compromises its author. Consider further that at such a crisis as this, when two great military powers are quivering with anxiety each to have the vantage ground of a first attack in case negotiations fail, how difficult, nay, how impossible, it must be to preserve that quiet equilibrium of judgment which is indispensable for the comity of nations. I am convinced that had despatches travelled by courier between Paris and Berlin, and weeks of ample discussion been afforded to the people of both countries, the risk of war would have been diminished, to say the least of it, and if it did burst out, the burden of guilt could have been unequivocally assigned; at all events the people of both countries would have had time to reflect on the terrible dangers they incurred, and sober second thoughts might have come to the rescue. I do not mean by this to affirm that war between France and Germany could have been permanently averted even by the slow methods of 18th century diplomacy. I have already expressed my belief that the state of feeling in France was such as to make a conflict with Germany almost unavoidable; still I hold that any obstacle placed in the way of precipitate decisions on such fearful issues would be a vast gain to humanity—it would in some cases stave off wars entirely, in others it would let in a flood of light upon obscure questions and enable the moral judgment of the world to act with powerful effect upon the guilty party. Nations, in their quarrels, are very like individuals. How often will hasty words about some trifling dis-

pute separate friends and build up a wall of coldness; but if time had been allowed for reflection before pronouncing their judgment, how trumpery the question will seem to themselves, and how unworthy of a quarrel. Could we not have some court in Europe to which international quarrels could be referred, if not for final decision, at least with the view of obtaining a judicial opinion? How much easier it would be for a government that was in the wrong to admit its error when urged by an assembly of its peers than to eat humble pie on the demand of its rival backed by military force. I do not think the time has yet come in Europe for a confederation of states which shall authoritatively declare public law and unite to punish the offender. The civilization of Europe is too unequal, its radical ideas of right and wrong too unsettled, to give any prospect of combining in an Areopagus of this sort, but it seems by no means impracticable to establish a court for international adjudication, to which the appeal should be voluntary, and whose decisions only carried moral weight. It would at least provide an arena where two proud nations, heated with controversy and unwilling to yield to each other, could refer their disputes without sense of national dishonour, and surely even that is a great step on the present barbarous method of fighting national duels. It may be added in recommendation of this scheme that the nation which felt most sure of being right would be readiest to resort to this court, and if the other declined, it would be presumptive evidence its cause was bad. Indeed if such a scheme came into play it is difficult to conceive that a great nation would hatch up a paltry plot against an innocent neighbour, or weave a web of cunning intrigue which could be exposed by so august an assembly. To revert to an illustration from private life, we find that where the system of arbitration is recognised, far fewer frauds are concocted, and the weak are protected against the strong, so among nations those dirty intrigues which historians exhume would be far less frequent in future if the

judgment of the world could be brought to bear at the moment of their perpetration.

It is true that at the treaty of Paris, in 1856, the plan of arbitration was recommended for the settlement of future quarrels, but no court was devised to carry out its provisions, and the suggestion has remained a dead letter. It is discouraging to think that France, when reminded of this proviso and urged to act on it, absolutely declined, and Prussia also refused on the ground that, as France declared war first, it was her part to take the initiative in asking for mediation. The friends of humanity may well feel discouraged at this reckless haste to draw the sword, but they should not relax their efforts on that account to graft a higher morality on the code of Europe. The triumphs of humanity are only obtained by slow and hesitating steps; like the rise of the tide, it advances and recedes, yet making in each generation substantial progress. The laws of war, terrible as they be, are much milder than even half a century ago. May we not hope that the intercourse of nations will be gradually purged of that barbarism that still surrounds it, and that the close of this most destructive war will be the starting-point for a great innovation in the cause of international concord.

There remains, in conclusion, one subject more on which I would remark, viz., *the rights and duties of neutrals.* This war, like the great American civil war, has been fruitful of difficult and perplexing cases for the statesmen of neutral countries, and England, as the great carrier of the world, has come in for the lion's share of abuse from both belligerents. It is unhappily beyond doubt that no policy which is possible to a neutral country will entirely satisfy the morbid susceptibilities of belligerents; to their excited vision there will appear, from time to time, deviations from strict impartiality which no care can provide against. We wish that the odium incurred by our country sprang from no deeper causes than this; but we are bound to say in the interest of truth that the refusal of our

government to stop the export of arms and munitions of war is a policy unworthy of our greatness and the moral influence we profess to wield. It is a policy that will surely work mischief in the future, and it is impossible to see any advantage arising from it that will compensate the necessary evil ; it is certain in all cases to exasperate one of the combatants, and it seldom gains any goodwill from the other, or confers any real advantage on it. In the present case we have unhappily sown the seeds of distrust in the bosoms of our natural allies, the Germans, and have got not a word of thanks from their prostrate enemy. So much do we feel the evil effects of our present policy that we would rather see our national debt increased twenty millions than let the gunmakers of Birmingham or the miserable hucksters who trade in national dishonour pocket their few thousands of profit from this disreputable trade. And what is the great principle which our government asserts at so heavy a cost of international cordiality ? simply an adhesion to what it conceives to be the usages of international law. It has discovered what is perfectly true, that international law has not yet proscribed to neutral nations the sale of arms to belligerents, and therefore it insists at all costs on upholding this right. But what is this awful authority—called International Law—that compels us to run such risks, and to shut our eyes to the dictates of common sense and common humanity ? International law is no Decalogue written by the finger of God, neither is it a statute book, compiled by the common consent of man. It is nothing but a collection of ever-varying usages—the customs, in short, of civilised nations in their dealings with each other, especially as regards the rights and obligations of war. These customs have changed with the progressive civilization of the world, and will necessarily change from age to age, and what the common conscience of mankind sanctions in one age will be generally condemned in another. International law 500 years ago did not forbid neutral nations lending for hire bands

of mercenary soldiers to fight the battles of belligerents with whom they were at peace. The morality of Europe revolts against such practices now. The same authority has allowed the sale of arms by neutral nations up to the present time, though with sharper and sharper protests from the parties aggrieved, and with less and less acquiescence from the judgment of Christendom, and the time seems now to be reached when this trade will be as thoroughly condemned as that of the mercenary captain of the middle ages or the smuggler of modern times. Is it worthy of a nation like England to wait till united Europe combines to proscribe this injurious trade? Is it not far worthier of her to lead the way in bringing the lagging enactments of international law abreast of the advanced morality of the nineteenth century. The general policy of the ministry is entitled to warm approbation, but this decision to let alone the traffic in arms and munitions of war is a blot on their escutcheon, and will be a source of national regret hereafter. They have no excuse from want of proper powers, for Parliament foreseeing that the time might arise when the executive ought to put an embargo upon this trade, has passed a law which enables the Queen, by an order in Council, to stop the export of arms. The responsibility rests with the ministry, and I hope they will be taken to strict account next session, and taught that the national intelligence on this point outruns their own.

I am quite aware that some plausible reasons are urged against interfering with this trade; it is said that its prohibition would be nugatory, as a smuggling traffic would spring up. We reply that our custom house can prevent smuggling in sugar and tobacco, and it could just as well stop an illicit trade in arms. We further remark, that even if smuggling went on in spite of our utmost care, the nation and its government would be free from blame—they would have done what they could, and no foreign country would have any cause to complain. But a grave reason overshadows this one, and weighs, I believe, with

our government more than any other; they say if neutrals are debarred the trade in arms with belligerents, may they not be hindered from everything that can be counted as contraband of war? May they not be shut off from all dealings whatever with the angry combatants on the plea that every commodity they send them, whether corn or coal or cotton, has an indirect influence in aiding the prosecution of the war? We believe this confusion about contraband of war has thrown an enormous quantity of dust into philosophical eyes, and under high sounding questions of principle has closed the eyesight to common-sense. I make bold to say that nobody but a metaphysician or a jurist would place on the same footing a trader in implements of mutual destruction and one in harmless merchandise. The common feelings of manhood will never rebel against selling corn or coal to starving people, as it does against selling cannon and muskets to furious combatants for the slaughter of each other. If people can draw no distinction between the two, it is manifestly a case where "much learning hath made them mad." Of course, I do not presume to define what belligerents may lawfully treat as contraband of war. There are special circumstances where the commonest necessaries of life may be properly treated as contraband; for instance, a cargo of blankets and quinine running into Charleston during the American war might be properly treated as such, but no man in his senses could ever expect that Great Britain should prohibit the export of blankets and quinine because there was war in America. The proper use of such articles is good and beneficial for mankind, and the presumption is that the trade in them is lawful; but the use of engines of war can never be good and beneficial, their only use is for destruction, and a government has no need of Argus eyes to find out with what object they are exported. The public opinion of America looked upon the trade in arms with very different feelings from the trade in blankets, and the public feeling of Germany distinguishes between coal and cannon, not-

withstanding that some metaphysical writers have sought to confound them.

But there are free trade objectors—men who believe that all laws, human and divine, must give way to the transcendant principle of unrestricted freedom of trade. There is a current of opinion in this country formed by a life-time of discussion on economical laws, which is so steeped in the science of barter that it is blind to all considerations which qualify its commercial maxims.

Men educated in this school recoil from the very idea of interfering with trade; they are so convinced that the welfare of humanity depends upon buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market that any dissent from these doctrines is treated as rank heresy. The fair fame of this country is much injured abroad by the predominance that commercial considerations appear to have in our national policy. It is the common opinion on the Continent that England will do anything for trade, and will do nothing without the prospect of pecuniary return. No doubt this view is in a great degree erroneous, but the policy we are now following in the matter of exporting arms lends too much colour to it. To the arguments of the ultra-free-traders I would reply that all economical laws must be limited by other and higher laws, and when moral and political considerations clash with commercial, as they will sometimes do, the commercial must give way. We justly interfere to prevent the sale of poison, or at least place it under strict supervision. We limit, and I hope we will limit still more, the sale of intoxicating drinks. We prevent the traffic in slaves, we restrict that in coolies, and we are just as much entitled to restrict that in weapons of war. The principles of free-trade are as little applicable to that traffic as to any other dangerous to humanity; and the advance of civilization, instead of sweeping away all restrictions on commercial intercourse, will exact better securities that the lust of gain does not lead to trafficking in human misery.

But endless precedents are cited why our government should not interfere. The case of Prussia in the Crimean war is constantly quoted; no doubt the retort is valid when the question is strictly considered as one of international law, but as an answer to the moral instincts of the nation it is unsatisfying in the last degree. This slavish adherence to precedents has always been the bane of British policy; it has again and again run the ship of state among the breakers, and well nigh caused irreparable disasters. Need I mention how the absurd claim to tax our colonies was persisted in till it cost us the empire of North America; how the odious right of search was clung to till it thrust a war with America upon us at the very crisis of our great struggle with the first Napoleon; and how the claim of this country to the unchangeable allegiance of all British-born subjects was only relinquished a year or two ago, when it had long been an absurd anachronism, and had nearly plunged us into several wars. Cases might be multiplied indefinitely where obsolete rights were clung to by this country till their exercise had to be relinquished under peril of national disaster. How much better to anticipate the march of opinion, and soften by appropriate legislation the friction of inevitable changes.

But we are not going into a historical retrospect of British policy; our business is simply with the questions which arise out of this war, and the most prominent of these, in respect of neutral obligations, is the sale of arms to belligerents. Let us hope that a European Congress will meet after this war and pronounce a solemn decision on this point, and settle on a sounder basis than hitherto the rights and duties of neutrals. If it adds to this achievement the establishment of a Council of Arbitration for the settlement of international disputes, and thereby enlarges the empire of reason at the expense of brute force, the present war will not have been fought in vain, and some residuum of advantage will accrue to the nations of Europe from the terrible death-grapple between France and Germany.

The subject of this essay is now exhausted, and if we have succeeded in showing that the golden thread of Providence runs through the murky darkness that now broods over Europe, our purpose is accomplished. Truly it needs faith to discern the bow of promise amidst those threatening clouds; for how bitter a satire on our boasted modern progress is the siege of Paris,—a city of two million souls, and the fairest ever built by man, in danger of being torn to fragments by the hellish engines of modern war! Let us fervently hope that this supreme calamity may be averted, and that history will not soil its page with a story of ruin—the like of which the world never saw since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. But if this may not be, it will be some support, amid the horrors of such a sight, to know that the higher interests of mankind are not forgotten, and that a purer and nobler civilization will spring out of the ashes of this conflagration.

# RATIONALISM AND THE BIBLE.*

## INTRODUCTORY.

THE present age is one of intense mental activity; the human intellect is incessantly engaged in probing the foundations of all things, human and divine; no received opinion, however sacred, is allowed to remain unquestioned, and every weak joint in the armour of truth is the mark for a thousand arrows.

That most precious of all gifts to humanity—the Christian religion—stands in the forefront of the battle; around it rages a violent storm of controversy, the most powerful artillery of the human mind assails it on every vulnerable point; whether on the side of historical criticism, physical science, or psychology, it is attacked with consummate skill, and the minds of the faithful are perplexed by the subtle objections of the adversaries. In former ages the anti-Christian controversy was conducted in a coarser fashion. The infidelity of Paine and Voltaire was revolting to spiritual minds, and though it supplied plausible arguments against Christianity to those who were already hostile, it was comparatively innocuous to true believers. A different and more deadly warfare is waged in the present day. An affected admiration of Christ and His teaching is paraded alongside of arguments which would sap His authority, and undermine all rever-

* This, and the following lecture, on Rationalism and Miracles, lately delivered in the town of Liverpool, were designed to meet in a popular form the rationalistic objections to Christianity, now so common. Having been addressed mainly to commercial men, care was taken to avoid, as much as possible, technical terms and theological subtleties. The writer felt, indeed, that as a man of business himself, he was not entitled to deal with the subject except in a plain and practical way. This way, besides, appeared to him best adapted for gaining many to the cause of truth who might otherwise miss the mark. A deep persuasion of this led to the publication of these remarks.

ence for Holy Scripture. A weak, emasculated mixture, called Christianity, is substituted for the sacred utterance of the oracles of God, and mankind are told they may select this or reject that at their fancy, and construct each for himself a theory of religion to which the name of Christ is appended for decency's sake. There are of course endless modifications of the programme. Some schools of theosophists admit more than others. Some revere the person of Christ, and allow that His teaching may have been true, but hold that we have so imperfect a report of His words, we cannot now obtain a true likeness of the original. Others more foolhardy, deny that the Master Himself was infallible, and argue that His sayings may be criticised like Shakespeare's, and the wheat separated from the chaff by a process of eclecticism. Some base their arguments mainly on the corruptness of the sacred text; others on the ignorance of the men who wrote it; some accept the moral teaching, but reject the supernatural; others find fault even with the morality. It would be wearisome and out of place here to review all the phases of modern unbelief; suffice it to say that their name is legion, and their influence is diffused most widely even among Christian society. It has struck the writer that the vigour of the defence has not been proportioned to the vehemence of the attack, and that more might be urged in favour of a sound and hearty faith in Scriptural Christianity than has yet been done. At all events, the arguments of apologists are too much confined to detached points of the system, and fail to set forth with sufficient emphasis what must always weigh most with the average of human minds, viz., *the credibility of the Christian revelation as a whole.* We propose to consider in these pages some of the practical aspects of Christianity which recommend it to the unsophisticated human mind, and point out how irreconcilable are many of the modern objections with any plan of revealed religion that could possibly meet the wants of the human race.

THE NECESSITY OF A REVELATION PROVED BY HISTORY.

But first we are told by many that a revelation is unnecessary. Has not God—say they—given to all men reason and conscience, and does not His spirit work in all hearts, leading them if they choose, to the knowledge of His will? Has not the spirit of God spoken through Socrates and Plato, as well as Christ? May not even Buddha and Confucius have heard His sacred voice, and proclaimed to the myriads of the East all that they require to know about their Maker? It is a favourite view with many that God has been speaking in all the ages, and manifesting Himself through prophets equal in authority to, or at least as truly inspired as, Jesus Christ. Those who hold this view of course repudiate the exclusive claims of Christianity; their theory is absolutely incompatible with those innumerable sayings of Christ, in which he demands absolute allegiance from all men, and announces that He, and He only, is the Lord of quick and dead, the only begotten Son, the Saviour of the world. Either Christ had as little right to make these claims as Mahomet, or His real teaching has been so lost amid a cloud of tradition that we can only trace a few faint outlines. It is perfectly clear that this view as to the equality of all revelations, or rather the necessity for none, is equivalent to the rejection of the Christian scheme, and the Bible can never maintain its authority among men if it be allowed that the Koran, or the Vedas, or the Golden Book of Mormon, are to divide with it the honour of being the utterance of God.

But what does history say to this theory of an all-pervading and ever-present manifestation of God? Do we find that in all ages and in all climes the spiritual and moral state of mankind has been steadily advancing? Do we find that a higher civilization has been steadily supplanting the lower, and that mankind in all parts of the world have been coming by consentaneous movement to the recognition of those sublime truths that we

have learned from the Bible? All this we would have a right to expect if God had manifested Himself alike to all people, and in all times. We find just the opposite; we find nowhere a steady advance of humanity, except under the influence of Bible teaching and Christian morality.

In support of this assertion, let us first glance at the religions of the East. We find the Hinduism of modern India a vile and corrupting system, incapable of regenerating mankind, and showing no advance, but a retrogression from the comparative purity of the Vedic hymns; we find even now widow-burning and self-torture sanctioned, nay, enjoined, by the Brahminical priesthood; and till Christianity had cast its pure rays on that darkened race, there did not arise among the two hundred millions of India a single teacher who could shake the hoary fabric of superstition, Let us turn to China, and we find another effete religion of nature, perhaps not so noisome in its doctrines as Hinduism, but equally incapable of elevating the moral life of the people, or bringing them into anything like a noble and progressive civilization. It is not our intention here to examine the doctrinal systems of heathendom, but to judge them by their fruits, and so we will not refer to the systems of Buddha and Confucius, the so-called prophets of China, beyond saying that, except some dry moral aphorisms, they supply no food for the spiritual wants of man, and that China has remained some three thousand years or more, that is, as far back as history extends, in the same torpid corrupt state of civilization it now exhibits. Materialism is its faith, the future has no hopes or no terrors, and a practical atheism broods over that vast section of mankind; nor will it ever be dispelled till the light of Christ shines into the dark void. We are not unaware that certain lofty and true utterances are ascribed to Brahma and Buddha and the Sikh Gooroos. Those legendary characters have a nimbus of radiance around them, which attracts the reverential gaze of the student of antiquity, and certainly there have come down to us sayings

ascribed to them which indicate truer views of goodness than their modern expounders possess. We do not deny that among heathen philosophers some attained loftier moral heights than others; nay, we admit that in some sense, by acting up to the light of nature, they received a degree of divine light into their souls. But we hold that neither Brahma, nor Buddha, nor Socrates, nor Plato, received in any proper sense a revelation, that is, an authoritative declaration from God of His will respecting men. They received no such revelation as Abraham or Moses, nor are they to be named in the same breath with Him to whom Moses and the Prophets bare witness, and who was either the eternal and only begotten Son of God, or the greatest self-deceiver that ever trod the earth.

But Greece and Rome may be cited as more favourable examples of the abiding manifestation of the Divine presence. Their civilization once shone with a brilliant light, and still draws the admiring gaze of all cultivated minds. Surely, if ever there was an opportunity for man to do without an outward revelation from God, it was in the heydays of Greece, when such a galaxy of genius adorned the world as has never been surpassed in after-times. If human philosophy could regenerate mankind, surely the country of Plato and Socrates, of Aristotle and Pythagoras, would become a model of virtue. And we do not deny that the Hellenic soil brought forth some choice fruits. It nourished a heroic patriotism which still, after the lapse of two thousand years, makes the pulse bound at the names of Marathon and Thermopylæ; it covered the land with the most lovely creations of art, and in the wide sphere of intellectual achievement it erected monuments that will last while the world endures. But the genius of Greece lamentably failed when it came to expound the relations of God to man; its force was destructive, but not constructive. It exploded the airy fabrics of primeval nature-worship; it expelled the Dryads from the woods and the Naiads from the fountains; it dethroned the

Thunderer, and turned the laugh against gloomy Dis: but it could not construct a new religion; it failed utterly to erect any bulwark against the tide of human passion, and did not stop for a day the decay of Grecian morals. Greek philosophy, at its best, could only speculate darkly on the existence of a God; whether He was one or many, whether He cared for man or no, whether His empire were righteous or unrighteous, were merely questions of dialectics, and had no moral influence on the mass of the people. All the wisdom of the Greeks, from Thales to Plutarch, discovered less of the Divine character than we find in the Sermon on the Mount, and it effected less for the advancement of piety than a single letter of St. Paul. The decline of Greece is, indeed, one of the saddest pages of history. It bloomed for a brief era with uncommon splendour; but the flower concealed a canker-worm, and Hellenic civilization was quenched in a night of Cimmerian darkness, and perished amid vices which the pen of the historian refuses to describe.

The efflorescence of Roman civilization was a weaker copy of that of Greece. The philosophy of Rome was second-hand, and Cicero and Seneca reproduced in a Roman dress the best thoughts of the Academy and the Porch. The most influential school of Roman moralists was that of the Stoics, and amid the wreck and crash of a falling State, they exhibited a sublime equanimity. But their system was cold and hard; it inculcated no love of humanity, far less a love of God. The Stoic enwrapped himself in a shroud of indifference, and, regarding the world with contempt, rejoiced that he could leave it when he chose by the act of self-destruction. Stoicism, if it be worthy of the name of a religion, was never fitted to go beyond a small school of philosophers, and scarcely even rippled the surface of social life. When Roman literature and philosophy were at their zenith, the morals of the people were decaying. The Augustan era was one of practical Atheism, and if we wish to revert to the purest times of Rome, we must go back to the infancy of the

commonwealth, when great questions of State policy were determined by the aspect of a calf's liver or the feeding of the sacred chickens. The early days of Rome were days of genuine belief, but it was belief in childish superstitions. Its later days replaced these superstitions by a refined philosophy, but so far from conducting its people to a purer civilization, the nation became more and more corrupt, till the primal laws of Nature were set at nought and a seething mass of corruption engendered, which the pen of the great Apostle has delineated in that most awful of all recitals of human wickedness—the first chapter of Romans.

If Greek and Roman history teach anything, it proves that "when men do not like to retain God in their knowledge, they are given over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient." And Rome in the time of Tiberius and Nero reads the same lesson as Paris in the days of the Commune. A godless philosophy can never lay solid foundations for human virtue, and in its attempt to do without God, will only bring forth a monstrous abortion.

In this rapid review of heathen religions we have not thought it needful to refer in detail to all the nations of antiquity. The ancient civilization of Egypt and Assyria shows as few traces of a pure theology as that of India and China. Persia is distinguished by the great name of Zoroaster, around whom has gathered a halo of legend, like the mythical renown of Brahma and Buddha, but all that we can learn of religion from its modern representatives, the Parsees, proves that it has no more power to regenerate mankind, or even to enforce a virtuous life, than the Buddhist or Brahminical systems.

We find then that all the *civilized* nations of antiquity were without a true knowledge of God. Neither the light of nature, nor the light of conscience conducted them to a religion of holiness. They made no progress in finding out the truth as concerning God's relations to man; their philosophy was powerless to enforce morality, and their civilization contained the

fatal germs of decay; so that when we look back on the ancient world, we see wave after wave of humanity breaking, and disappearing on the barren rocks of human speculation. The process is ever the same. Certain crude notions of the Divine are projected from man's consciousness, but they have no foundation in positive truth, and are successively swept away by the tide of time, leaving the race as poor in moral and spiritual intelligence as their remote ancestors.

But do we find that the *savage* races of the globe have succeeded better in the quest after God? Do we find anywhere traces of primeval innocence among them, or purer and holier notions of the Divine character than the civilized nations of antiquity developed? It once was a dream of sophists that man in the savage state was comparatively pure, but the close researches of modern investigators have made it only too plain that the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. Whether we turn to the Red Indians of North America, the Negroes or Hottentots of Africa, the aboriginal races of the South Sea Islands, or the Esquimaux of Greenland, we come upon no traces of an elevated conception of the Deity, but we meet everywhere with a degraded fetichism, for the most part accompanied by the practice of barbarous rites, and we find that these various races, when they first come in contact with civilized man, are in no degree advanced beyond the place their ancestors filled thousands of years before. It is the extreme of folly to hold that savage man is gradually developing from his own barren soil a truer and holier religion. No one could assert this who is not entirely blinded by his aversion to revealed truth. Whatever arguments may be advanced for the need of a revelation from a review of the civilized or semi-civilized Pagan nations may be urged *a fortiori* from a review of the savage tribes of mankind. The universal testimony of all humanity is that man cannot find out God, and so God must graciously reveal Himself to man, if His character and will are ever to be known at all.

THE BIBLE GOD'S REVELATION PROVED BY HISTORY.

Now we contend that the Bible, and the Bible only, contains a true revelation of God to man, or rather, we should say, the Bible contains a true record of all the revelations that God has made to man, ending with the crown and flower of them all—the Christian religion. Before we proceed to consider the fitness of God's revelation contained in the Bible, we will pursue the historical argument a little further to show that those nations alone which have received the Bible have developed a pure and Christian civilization. And first, let us take the Jews. That nation was chosen by God to be the depositary of the earlier or Mosaic revelation, and at a time when the earth was overspread by idolatry, was selected to be a witness to the oneness of God. Do we find then such a moral superiority in the Jewish race over the contemporary Gentiles as to afford witness of the greater light they received? We unhesitatingly reply in the affirmative. We find all through the history of the Jews, from Abraham to Christ, a succession of holy men of God who bore testimony to one Supreme and Holy Being, whose will was the law of their lives, and whom they obeyed at the sacrifice of all that men count dear. No efforts of sceptical criticism can dispose of the fact that such men existed; it is childish to suppose that men like Abraham, Moses, and Elijah, were the creation of fancy, like the legendary prophets of heathendom. There is about their lives, as recorded in the Bible, such a perfect naturalness and consistency as utterly rebuts the idea of their being figments of human imagination. Their sins and shortcomings are narrated with the same simplicity as their virtues; there is never the least attempt to gloss over the failings of old Testament Saints; there is no attempt to palliate sin, there is no attempt to bring down the claims of the Eternal to the level of feeble humanity. God is ever represented as claiming absolute homage, and man as being favoured in

proportion as he yields it. The biographies of Old Testament Saints present a marvellous contrast to the spurious hero-worship of man. Compare the Greek legends of Hercules with the story of Abraham, or the Roman myths about Romulus with the inspired account of Moses, and the stamp of God's truth is seen in forcible contrast to man's invention. Even if it could be proved—which we do not admit—that much historical inaccuracy is incorporated in the Old Testament, it is impossible to deny that a long succession of holy men of God flourished before the coming of Christ, and no other contemporary nation showed anything like it. True, it may be said that the Jewish nation broke out again and again into idolatry, that it imitated the worst vices of surrounding nations, and was almost chronically in a state of rebellion against God, and some may urge that on this account it was none the better of God's revelation. We deny the force of this. The Jews when they sinned did so against a clear revelation of duty, and were often brought back in deep contrition to seek the face of the Most High. They never shut their ears entirely to the voice of God's prophets, and even when an Ahab was on the throne, there were still seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. We find periods of great national mourning for sin, as in the days of Nehemiah, and we look in vain in all the heathen world for anything analogous to this. When the Gentile nations thought that they had offended some deity, they hastened to appease him by some foul and bloody sacrifice, as Agamemnon, for instance, offered up his daughter Iphigenia to propitiate the winds which delayed the Grecian fleet; but the Jews alone testified that repentance towards God meant a moral reformation. Jewish history indeed presents a continued struggle between the unbended claims of Divine holiness and the stubborn self-seeking heart of man, and reflects, as in a mirror, the eternal conflict that goes on in each struggling soul of man, and is replete with lessons, sometimes allegorical, sometimes typical,

often plain and literal, which will never cease to educate even the Christian conscience in some of the deepest concerns of our Spiritual nature.

But we readily admit that the Old Testament dispensation was in some respects a failure. Looking at it from the human standpoint, and judging it by its effect on the nation, it did not succeed in securing a general allegiance to the Most High. An undertone of sadness runs through the whole history of the Jews; in that unique example the Old Testament affords of the history of a nation narrated with exclusive reference to its relation to God, the prevailing note is one of complaint, that the favoured race were so stiff-necked as to bring on themselves repeated chastisement, and towards the close of the volume the darkness deepens, and the nation that rejects God is at last cast off by Him. The Jewish dispensation was a preparation for a higher one, "the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ," and when the only begotten Son was ushered into the world the Song of angels was "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace and goodwill to men." The era of types and ordinances had passed, and the full flood of Gospel light had dawned on mankind.

What evidence does the history of Christendom afford to the strength and purity of this new revelation? We hear by anticipation the chorus of objections which the infidel phalanx have always urged on this score. We are reminded of the blots that disfigure the history of Christian Europe, of the corruptions of so-called Christian societies and the shameful persecuting practices of so-called Christian governments. Nothing is easier than to heap reproaches on Christianity from the inconsistent lives of its professors; nothing is easier than to draw from the history of Europe, for eighteen hundred years, a host of accusations against that holy religion it so often perverted and parodied. It is a stock subject to contrast the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the horrors of the Inquisition, the cruelties of Philip and Alva, the

religious wars of Germany, or to go further back, the waste and folly of the Crusades, with the misdeeds of heathen nations, and to pretend that the world has been none the better for Christianity; but this reasoning can only impose on the superficial, or serve as an excuse to the wilfully blind.

The writers of the New Testament never led us to expect that evil would be rooted out in these ages, or even that it would be prevented assuming portentous dimensions from time to time; indeed they foretell with prophetic fire, periods of sad apostasy, when the faith once delivered to the saints, should be in danger of eclipse, and when outbreaks of human wickedness would overshadow the pure light of Christ; but they lead us to expect, nevertheless, that the candle of true and undefiled religion would never cease to burn, and that in the distant future, probably in a new dispensation, "the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." We contend that these anticipations have been strictly fulfilled, and that Christianity has done for the world just what its author predicted it would do. It has kept up in all ages in the hearts of many a flame of devotion to Christ; it has supplied a never-ending succession of Martyrs, who have testified by their blood that they counted not their lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy; it has maintained a deadly struggle with all forms of national wickedness, and has often so impressed the conscience of nations, that they have voluntarily relinquished great sources of profit and pleasure. Has not Christianity well-nigh extinguished slavery and polygamy in all nations among which it has come? Has it not stigmatised infanticide and prostitution, which were legalized by some of the most advanced nations of antiquity? Has it not slowly and steadily softened the cruel usages of warfare, and is it not gradually creating a current of public opinion which looks upon all war as barbarous and unchristian? There cannot be a doubt that, just as the religion of Christ has penetrated the life of a nation, it has in that

degree purified its laws, and produced a higher civilization; and we maintain that those nations at the present day, in which the Bible is most revered, are exactly those in which the happiness and welfare of mankind have attained their maximum.

We hold that those dark crimes which disfigured the middle ages were the result, not of Christianity, but of the suppression of its divine utterance. It was when a usurping priesthood proscribed the use of God's word, and substituted a system of man's device for the sacred oracles, that corruption overspread Europe like a flood, and only when the Holy Volume was unlocked, and its teaching directly brought to bear on the common people, did a moral and spiritual reformation set in. We think modern European history conclusively testifies that Bible teaching, in its strength and integrity, is the only safeguard against widespread corruption and great national misfortunes—and yet, not completely effective—for so impetuous is the current of evil that it cannot be stemmed entirely, and even the most Christian nations invite the rod of correction; and when they will not use the surgeon's knife themselves, a higher hand must cut out the cancer. Thus it was that slavery was wrenched from America by a bloody war, and thus, it is to be feared, some judgment will overtake us if we do not Christianise and elevate the degraded masses of our great towns.

We conclude this side of our subject by the remark, that Christian civilization, unlike that of antiquity, is essentially progressive. Wherever the good seed of Divine truth is allowed to fulfil its proper function of leavening society, there is a steady progress from age to age, and none of those deplorable relapses the heathen world exhibited. No doubt there are ebbs and flows of a nation's life; there are periods of political growth and decline, but its real welfare keeps advancing, and each century marks a higher coast line in the tide of moral progress. There is no fear of any Christian nation, where the Bible holds its proper place, vanishing from the page of history

like ancient Babylon and Tyre, or sinking into that slough of corruption, where Imperial Rome foundered.

### A WRITTEN AND AUTHORITATIVE REVELATION NECESSARY—THE BIBLE SHOWN TO BE SUCH.

We now pass from the ground of history to examine this question in the light of man's nature and necessities, and to inquire, first, whether a written and permanent record of God's Revelation, such as we have in the Sacred Scriptures, is not the best, and indeed the only effectual, plan for preserving a true religion from age to age.

The great quarrel that modern scepticism has is with the Bible; it is not so much with Christianity as being a collection of lofty truths, as with the inspired volume that is the repository of these truths. The favourite view of many philosophers now-a-days is that the religion taught by Christ was the best ever made known to man; but it was a mixture of truth and error, which the rational and moral sense must examine for itself without allowing its deductions to be overruled by any written authority, whether of St. Paul or of what the Evangelists relate of Christ. They hold that the Bible is a book full of errors—historical, scientific, and metaphysical, and that by rejecting its authority a purer digest of Christianity can be obtained by the enlightened mind of man. These people, represented now-a-days by Strauss and Renan on the Continent, and among English writers by Matthew Arnold, evoke an ideal Christ from their inner consciousness, and put him forward as far superior to the historical one. They strip His character of its miraculous claims, excise from His reported sayings whatever transcends their human reason, and thus construct a nebulous theory of Christianity, which they are weak enough to suppose will supplant the New Testament in the reverence of mankind.

We join issue with this school on the very threshold, and assert that there never could have been a Christian religion at all without an authoritative record. Let us suppose for a

moment that the sayings of Christ had been loosely scattered to the winds; that they had been preserved in no authentic shape; that His followers used their own judgment in deciding what to receive or reject—think you that such a loose system would ever have made its way against the fiery opposition of a corrupt age? Think you that the early disciples would have been willing to abandon all that men count dear, to lead lives of incessant hardship, with almost the certainty of a cruel death, all for the sake of a religion which existed in no authoritative shape, and which no two of them were agreed about? But the difficulties are enormously enhanced when we pass the Apostolic age. It is possible to imagine that the eye-witnesses of Christ, impressed by the holy words He uttered and the supernatural powers He claimed, might have propagated His teachings with some approach to uniformity, during their lifetime, even without the aid of written records or an acknowledged body of doctrine, or without what the Church claims for them—an indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, which ever kept in their memory what Christ had spoken. All this is perhaps credible, though barely so on mere rational grounds; but what shall we say to the following age, when the feeble movement commenced by the fishermen of Galilee was to push its way on all sides among the philosophers of Athens and Alexandria, as well as the debased serfs of the Roman Empire—among the savage hordes of Scythia as among the mouldering remains of Oriental civilisation! How was a religion that was entirely based on the claims of a Person, and respecting whom such extraordinary facts were related, ever to make headway, unless the views of its teachers were to be accordant on all essential points? How was the heathen world to be induced to forsake those unholy pleasures which were its daily aliment, to give up its gladiator-shows, its impure dramas, its ancient oracles, its sacred groves, to crucify "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," if the expounders of this new religion, so distasteful to flesh and blood,

had not the invincible sanction of a "Thus saith the Lord?" Christianity would inevitably have foundered amidst the opposition of an ungodly world, had an authoritative record of its origin not been preserved and acknowledged by the Christian Church. Had it been open to question among the early Fathers, whether Christ really rose from the dead or not, whether He spoke the Sermon on the Mount, or wrought the miracle of the loaves and fishes, would it have been possible to have taught Christianity on any common ground? Nay, rather, would not the severe morality inculcated have been let down to the selfish demands of corrupt nature, and the divine lineaments of Christ's religion been hopelessly lost amid the fantastic shapes that human sophistry would have given to it? In other words, it would have become merely a system of philosophy, not a religion, and would have left as little trace on the future morals of mankind as did the teaching of Socrates, vaguely preserved as it is in the pages of Plato and Xenophon. Nothing appears to us more certain than that Christianity, humanly speaking, owes its enduring empire over man in an especial degree to the Book of Inspiration. It has formed a common ground, on which Greek and barbarian, learned and unlearned, bond and free, could always meet, and its doctrines have been stated in a way that commends them equally to every type of mankind and every degree of civilisation.

But the objection may be started, was not the early Church plagued by heretical sects? Do we not soon hear of Gnostics and Ebionites, of Marcionites and Manicheans? Were not the early Church fathers engaged in constant disputes with those schismatics? And if the New Testament had been universally accepted as the exposition of Christian doctrine, how came these divisions among the early Christians? We readily grant that there hung upon the skirts of the Christian Church, in the early ages, many false professors and many insidious friends. The name of Christian was used by many, whom Christ and His Apostles

would have disowned. The heretical sects were in most cases the offspring of semi-Pagan accommodations of Christianity; instead of founding upon the Sacred Scriptures alone, they combined with them the teachings of Plato and Aristotle, of Philo of Alexandria, of Epictetus and Seneca; they were a spurious compound, which, in the nature of things, could not last, and thus we see them dying out one by one; and those sects alone survived which made a common appeal to the Scriptures.

But it may be urged further, were there not early disputes about the canon of Scripture itself? Do we not hear of an epistle of Barnabas that obtained momentary authority, and some spurious Gospels that floated about for some time in the early Church? The minds of many have been unsettled by allegations of this kind, which strike at the authority of the New Testament; for if indeed we have only a human compilation out of a mass of early writings, claiming equal authority, then truly we have a weak basis upon which to found an authoritative system of religion. It is not within the scope of these remarks to investigate the canonical claims of Holy Scripture, but we will adduce one or two considerations admitted to be true, which tend greatly to allay anxiety. The spurious books, claiming to be inspired, were few in number; they never were marked by the imprimatur of the Catholic or universal Church. They never even acquired a decided ascendancy over any important section of the true Church; and, what is still more important, they differed widely in scope and character from the contents of our New Testament; their internal evidence of inferior origin is irresistible, and they very soon passed out of the category even of doubtful inspiration. The wonder is that, considering the ignorance of the age, and the want of critical knowledge, there should have been so few successful attempts to impose spurious accounts of Christ upon the early Church.

But graver difficulties have been started with regard to the canonicity of certain portions of our New Testament. Prodi-

gious pains have been taken to invalidate the Gospel and Revelation of John and some of the minor Epistles, and to produce an impression that our canon is the growth of a later age, when corrupt additions were made by a cunning and selfish priesthood. Now we admit that some difficulties have been raised, which it is very hard, after the lapse of eighteen hundred years, to answer in full. It is not possible now to say precisely at what period the several books of the New Testament made their appearance, and what was their reception by the existing societies of Christians; but we do find in the early Church fathers such abundant quotations from the writings of the New Testament, that, had the original documents been lost, their place could almost have been supplied by means of these citations. This is especially true of the first three Gospels, which are largely quoted by all writers, from Justyn Martyr to Augustine. It is true that the earliest of the fathers do not quote freely from the writings of John, though some of them use phraseology so like his—instance, Justyn Martyr about the supper—that, if not a quotation, it was a free rendering of his ideas; but this comparative silence can be explained on the supposition—a most natural one—that John wrote in his old age. His Gospel was obviously given as a supplement to the synoptical accounts, and his revelation was a vision at Patmos, where he was banished in extreme old age; and it is quite supposable that his writings, which may not have been produced till towards the close of the first century, would not have been diffused widely through the Church till the middle of the next, and by that time we find them appearing in citations as undoubtedly the word of God. Among the following Church fathers we find the Gospel of John as reverently quoted as the other three, and all alike treated as inspired records, and we also find a complete agreement from the earliest times in the reception of most of the Pauline Epistles; indeed we may say that historical criticism can do nothing to shake the fact

that the bulk of what we call the New Testament was received from the earliest times as authoritative by the Christian Church and all its controversies were settled by an appeal to it as to the oracles of God. Indeed it is quite remarkable to see what a general accord there is among the ante-Nicene fathers in the essential features of the Christian faith. Irenæus and Justyn Martyr, Cyprian and Tertullian, Clement and Origen, all preached substantially the same Gospel. With all these Christ was the Alpha and Omega, the sum and substance of their religion, and the great historical facts vouched for in the New Testament were never doubted by them. It is quite true they all had their minor differences; some of them had what we might even call extravagances, but there was no more difference between them that can be accounted for by the individuality of the human mind, and by their varying circumstances; they differed as Luther and Calvin did, as Zwingle and Melancthon, as Cranmer and Knox; but there runs through all their writings that grand moral unity which attests the presence of one Divine spirit, and the groundwork of a common book of inspiration. We think the moral agreement of the early fathers in all their laborious controversies with the enemies of Christianity a very strong argument in favour of the existence and authority of a divine record of Christ's religion. They all appeal to it as to a final arbiter, and all their divergences of view are supported by reference to, or inference from, the word of God.

It was at a later age that the voice of the Church—the Catholic Church, as it was now called—came to be looked upon as having a conjoint, though not equal, authority with, the Holy Scriptures. When the Church, in the time of Constantine, passed from the phase of persecution to that of earthly power, an irruption of worldliness took place, and a rapid deterioration was witnessed in the character of its teachers; the pure morality and spiritual religion of the New Testament became distasteful and, as a natural consequence, were kept out of view as far as

decency allowed. The idea of an infallible judgment residing in the Church, once started, spread with portentous rapidity, for it was obvious that such a claim, once admitted, gave boundless opportunity to the clergy to arrogate power; the copestone was laid on this theory when the infallible voice of the Church was made to speak through the Bishop of Rome, and the Papacy became the full-fledged embodiment of this doctrine. For many centuries the voice of God's word was seldom heard, and heaps of corrupt and frivolous additions were made to its simple requirements; but it is a noticeable fact that during all the dark ages of Popery there was no attempt to dispute the paramount authority of Scripture, or to tamper with the sacred text, and in this we recognise an unwilling testimony to the authority of God's revelation, and a proof of His watchful providence over the Sacred Volume. When we reflect upon the duplicity, the frauds, and even the barefaced forgeries that disgraced the Vatican during the middle ages, one cannot but see the hand of God in the preservation intact of the Inspired Book. When we reflect that the canon law of Rome, as Janus has scathingly demonstrated, is little better than a compilation of wicked forgeries —pretended Papal decrees, pretended imperial concessions, and so forth—it is truly surprising that the unscrupulous priesthood, who then had the custody of most of the manuscripts of the New Testament, never dared to alter the sacred text so as to support any of these fictitious claims, and the Codex Vaticanus ranks at this day, in the judgment of scholars, as equal in authority to the Sinaitic and Alexandrian, the three oldest and purest MSS. of the New Testament that are known to exist.

But what shall we say about the textual errors of the New Testament? Is it not true that we have many different readings of the sacred text, and how can this be reconciled with the theory of an authoritative record, inspired by God Himself? No subject of modern times has engaged so much erudition as this one of the proper text of the New Testament. Hundreds of scholars

have made it a life-work, many of them possessed of the acutest minds and extraordinary perseverance, and it may fairly be asserted now, that no important variation among the ancient codices remains undiscovered. The eagerness with which this question has been pursued may be judged from the fact that great questions of ecclesiastical policy sometimes hung upon the rendering of a few words of Scripture, and sects that had vehemently opposed each other for centuries would have given worlds to get a morsel of additional weight to their respective theories from the Word of God. But what has been the net result of all this investigation? We believe we are within the mark when we say that not a single leading doctrine has been touched, or any of the great features of Revelation altered in an appreciable degree. The textual variations,—and they amount to thousands—are, in the great majority of cases, minute verbal alterations, in no way affecting the sense of the passage—just such variations as must have resulted from repeated copyings of dusty and well-worn MSS. by human hands. There is a marvellous absence of intentional interpolation, and we do not believe it can be shown that, in the fourteen centuries when the world was dependent on the pen of the copyist for the transmission of the Divine Word there was ever a *bona fide* attempt of any importance to tamper with the original text. No classical work has stood the stress of modern criticism in the way that the New Testament has done. The works of Plato and Aristotle have been handled so freely by modern critics that the original text recedes into a nebulous background. Even Shakespeare is a battle-ground for textual purists, and it is surprising how many various readings are supported by good authority, and yet Shakespeare wrote when printing had given an author incomparable advantages over the writers of the New Testament. We venture to predict that eighteen hundred years after Shakespeare wrote, the true text of his plays will be involved in immensely greater obscurity than are the writings of the New Testament at the present day.

The argument against the authority of the New Testament, drawn from its textual variations, falls to the ground when thoroughly sifted; indeed a strong argument may be made out in favour of a special Providence from the wonderful success that has attended the preservation of the Divine records.

We have not touched here upon the question of the textual purity of the Old Testament; it requires an extent of learning which the writer does not possess, nor has it an essential bearing upon the general scope of our argument. We will only remark, that the Hebrew race paid extraordinary attention to the preservation of their sacred books; their scribes counted not merely the words, but the letters in the Old Testament, and the copies were revised with the most vigilant care, so that there is every reason to believe that our Hebrew version of the Old Testament is identical with what the Jews possessed many hundreds of years before Christ.

The general conclusion to which we are led from these observations is as follows:—A written and authoritative record of God's revelation was necessary to perpetuate the Christian religion. That record has been provided in the Bible. It comes down to us with the sanction of the universal Church; it is attested by the most abundant evidence, as having from the earliest times spoken with the authority of the word of God, and there is no proof that it has been tampered with to any appreciable extent, but ample evidence that we have the *ipsissima verba* of the writers as closely as is compatible with the fact, that human agency has transmitted them through countless generations, and that God has not chosen to work a special miracle on their behalf.

### ALLEGED INEXACTNESS OF THE BIBLE—ITS TEACHING PICTORIAL RATHER THAN SCIENTIFIC.

Thus much for the outward and historical side of our argument, and now we shall turn to the inward, or subjective

side, and examine some of the objections brought against the New Testament, on the ground of its contents.

We shall first deal with that well-worn objection, drawn from the many sects into which Christians are divided, and the common appeal they make to the word of God in support of their views. Arians and Socinians, Calvinists and Arminians, all alike, find or profess to find, in Scripture the basis of their theology, and yet it cannot be denied that the difference between their systems is very important. It is a specious objection that a Book which can be interpreted in so many different ways is unworthy of the rank it holds. It is alleged that it cannot be the workmanship of God if it speaks with so uncertain a voice. Surely, the Deity, if He spoke at all, would do so in accents so clear, that man's versatile intellect would be shut up to the single function of receiving the divine mandate. We believe there is no excuse which the unbeliever so often furnishes to his own conscience as this of the supposed uncertainty of what the Bible teaches. Now we will distinguish *in limine* between two groups of controversies that have been waged since the time of Christ about the Christian religion. One of them is represented by the Gnostics and other sects of ancient times, who assigned the Bible a secondary place, and treated reason and philosophy as of conjoint authority. The rationalistic schools of to-day are their lineal successors, and the Bible is to them a book of only limited authority. We hold that all the sects which have sprung from this impure source lie outside the pale of honest difference of Christian opinion. There is no limit to the fantastic shapes into which they throw Christian doctrine, and the Bible has no right to be discredited by the extravagances they have foisted upon it. The real objections to the Bible, grounded upon its supposed variety of teaching, are only to be fairly argued on the platform of honest belief, and in this part of our argument we have only to deal with the differences among those sects which agree in ascribing paramount authority to the word of God.

Now we admit that there do exist, there always have existed, and probably always will exist, honest varieties of opinion about what the Bible teaches on some of the multifarious points in which it comes into contact with human life; and this is not to be wondered at. It is the unavoidable consequence of the kind of revelation God has thought best to make to man, or, rather, we should say, of the kind which man's imperfect faculties alone enabled him to receive. In constructing the Bible, the Divine architect had to bear in mind the immense variety in the capacity and culture of the human race, and the Book had to be written so as to suit all alike—so as to minister spiritual life to the child as to the man, to the unlettered savage as to the philosopher. Many handle the Bible as though it had been designed only for the learned, and expect to find in it nothing but elaborate digests of theology and that scientific and logical development which scientific intellects crave; but in the eye of the Almighty the soul of the savage is as precious as that of the sage, and as the vast majority of His creatures always have been, and always must be, unlearned, the Book which is to guide them to Himself must needs be simple in its structure and easy to understand.

Hence it comes to pass that the Bible differs from all philosophical works; its teaching is pictorial rather than metaphysical; it affords a vast number of dissolving views in which man is seen in relation to God in every conceivable circumstance of life; instead of describing faith by abstruse researches into our mental powers, it paints the working of the principle in the life of Abraham; instead of analysing love psychologically, it shews us John leaning on Jesus' bosom; in displaying that grandest of attributes in the Almighty it holds up to the gaze of mankind the cross of Christ—that most affecting spectacle of self-sacrifice the world has ever seen; in impressing us with the awfulness and majesty of Jehovah, we have that wonderful panorama where Sinai thundered and the people trembled, while the trumpet sounding loud and long heralded the giving of the law.

We might multiply instances indefinitely to show with what marvellous skill the Book of God exhibits to the uncultured mind of man the deepest principles of the Divine nature. In reading the Scriptures, the glory of the Lord, as in a glass, passes before the mind, and the image of the Eternal mirrors itself on the human soul almost without its being aware of it. But this pictorial style of teaching is not capable of being resolved into rigid metaphysical systems, and hence, whenever the attempt is made to compress all the features of God's revelation into a severe system of thought, differences arise among men; but it is the glory of the Book, and not its weakness, that this is the case. It is a proof that it comes from One who is higher than man, and can address his moral nature through all its thousand channels, without being cramped and confined by the artificial rules that man must needs conform to when he sets up to be a teacher. The book of revelation and the book of nature are from the same hand, and they show striking resemblances; in both there is inexhaustible variety; in both there is an apparent disregard of all system, and yet underneath both there is a deep harmony, and the careful observer can find out a network of symmetrical laws which vindicate the wisdom of the Author. The simple rustic can find enjoyment in nature without knowing much of its laws, and so the simple believer can find spiritual life in the Bible though he knows little of theology, and can scarcely express in intelligible language the thoughts that burn within him.

It is an absolute necessity of man's moral nature that divine truth should be taught in the Bible popularly rather than scientifically; the unenlightened mind of man can only learn of God, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little;" it approaches the comprehension of the infinite mind of God, as an infant comes to understand his father. The little child at first can only learn through the medium of his senses, the reflective faculties are dormant; he must be punished for doing

wrong before he learns the reason why; he is denied many things he longs after before it can be explained to him that they are unwholesome; the first part of his education is the simple lesson of obedience to his parents, and it is only in riper years that he finds out the wisdom that taught him obedience; furthermore, in his infancy he can be taught only by symbols—he cannot understand language, much less reasoning, but he can soon learn to distinguish a look of displeasure from one of complacency, a tone of anger from the cooing of maternal love. Neither is it possible for a young child to receive full and complete ideas of anything; his first conceptions are in a crude and concrete form: his mother has taught him to shun the fire, and perhaps he has burned his finger, and his first impression of fire is one of dread; he has fallen into a well and nearly been drowned, and for a time he only thinks of wells with a shudder. From this it is evident that the teachers of a child can only at first tell it half-truths—it is essential that it should avoid fire and water, and so its parents speak of them at first as things only to be feared, and the qualifications with which these statements must be received in order to give a complete representation of the truth, are out of place at this stage of education.

So it is most wisely in God's revelation to Man. Many of its statements appear to contain only half-truths, because they can in no other way find an entrance into the dull, untutored mind of the spiritual babe. Thus, when Christ finds the Pharisees consumed with covetousness, and despising the poor, He tells them the parable of Dives and Lazarus. He represents the rich man as enduring torments, and the beggar as going to Abraham's bosom; nor is there any moral reason assigned for the difference. The rich man is not represented as wicked, nor the poor man as pious; there are none of those qualifications stated that are necessary to give complete expression to the justice of the award. There is seemingly a partial and one-sided description, but the great Teacher knew how to press home a great truth through

the thick crust of human selfishness. He wished to strip riches of their meretricious glory, and show the insignificance of man's earthly lot, compared with his eternal destiny; and so He wisely concentrated attention on that single point, and did not weaken the effect by throwing in qualifying statements. This principle furnishes a key to many difficulties in interpreting the Bible. It is not its habit to surround great truths with all their balancing considerations; it leaves those to be gathered from other portions of the field. When Christ says—"Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away," He does not in the same breath warn against encouraging imposture, and giving to vagabonds; but we find the Apostle Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians, forbidding that widows be supported by the Church unless they are old and deserving, and declaring, with respect to idle Church members, that "if any man will not work, neither shall he eat"—a pretty sure proof that He reprobated indiscriminate alms-giving.

The Bible is a book full of sublime truths, stated in the most striking manner, and so as irresistibly to penetrate the self-love of man. God well knew the tendency of the human mind to sophisticate and explain away distasteful duties, till nothing remained but a few shreds of the original principle. He knew how the Pharisees paid tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and neglected the weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy, and the love of God; how they robbed widows' houses, and for a pretence made long prayers, and therefore He told them, in words that could never be explained away, "Sell that ye have and give alms, provide yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the Heavens that fadeth not, where no thief entereth, neither moth corrupteth, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." But lest this saying, if isolated from all other teaching on the subject, should prove too hard a rule of life, we find that the Apostle is enjoined by the Spirit thus to define the duties of rich men: "Charge them that are rich in

this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." The great principle is laid down by Christ that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, and the practical application by Paul is that, when God gives wealth, He intends it to be used, like all His other gifts, in subservience to His glory and the good of men. We find the same twofold style of teaching regarding prayer, chastity, patience, and the leading virtues of the Christian character. Certain mandates are delivered respecting them of terrible incisiveness, which cut so deep indeed into the propensities of man and the customs of society, that they appear impracticable when looked at nakedly; but in searching the Scripture we come upon balancing truths which take off the hard edge of the commandment, and bring it into harmonious adjustment to the varied necessities of life; and hence it happens that the timid believer, who is at first staggered by the apparent harshness of the Divine commandments, discovers after a while that they admit of wonderful adaptation to the exigencies of life; and that, though they stand out in virgin purity, like the snow-clad peaks of the Alps, never condescending to accommodate themselves to any form of human evil, they do not harshly override the intricate mechanism of social life, but rather mould it so as to prove the truth of that Scripture: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come."

If we are right in this view of the Bible, it will follow that man will draw from it various lessons at the different stages of his spiritual growth. When his eyes are first opened to the supreme importance of eternal things, he is apt to despise altogether temporal things; he hears only such language as this:

"Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." "This world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God continueth ever." There is no room to attend to such minor injunctions as, "We exhort you to be quiet and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you." Like the early Christians, who lived in daily expectation of the coming of the Lord, and thus neglected their temporal concerns, he sees no importance in man's earthly relationships while his mind is absorbed with the things of eternity; but gradually he comes to see that God does not mean to divorce us from this world, and that we are to use it while not abusing it, and he finds the Bible full of minute instructions about the duties of life. His horizon expands, and the life beyond is not seen in violent antagonism to the life below, but rather as its complement and full development; he sees the gracious purpose of God running through all things, and voices from the eternal world reach him even in the workshop and at the plough. Now this spiritual growth is entirely in accord with the laws of our nature, and the Bible, in providing for it, shows consummate knowledge of man: it has in a very true and real sense, an exoteric and an esoteric circle; not like the philosophies of old, which despised the vulgar and declined to stoop from their oracular heights, but proceeding by a gentle gradation so that the babe may find milk and the man strong meat. Nor is human learning needed in order to understand the deep things of God, but only the teaching of the Holy Spirit, who is promised to all who ask Him.

### VARIETIES OF OPINION INEVITABLE FROM THE STRUCTURE OF THE BIBLE.

It must be evident to any one who reflects upon these facts that the materials lie ready for numerous schools of thought among even true believers. Those who are in the stage of

spiritual infancy will not see truth in the same light as those in spiritual manhood; the worldly Christians who have not progressed far will stumble at the lofty utterances of those who have been within the veil. Even the intellectual differences of man will be reflected in the interpretation of the Bible: the narrow matter-of-fact mind will lean toward hard literal interpretation; the imaginative mind will prefer the figurative; the recluse who shuns the world will look at human life with a tinge of monasticism; the busy man of affairs will find in the Bible an endless repertory of practical maxims for daily life. In the free play of Christian society sects and churches must necessarily arise embodying those types of character, and their statements of Divine truth, and their applications to human life will vary within the degrees we have indicated, without overstepping the bounds of genuine orthodoxy. We thus see a true reflection of Scriptural teaching in bodies so far apart as the Calvinists and the Quakers; and even the High Church and the Plymouth Brethren have a meeting-point in the Bible, and occupy a large common ground—probably much larger than they would respectively admit.

There is, in fact, a great resemblance between political and Christian societies, in respect of their variety of structure and creed. One who looked cursorily over the nations of the world might conclude that there are no axioms of political science—so extraordinary a diversity of government does he see; but the more careful student will find many points of resemblance between the most diverse, and, what is more important, a steady progress towards certain cardinal ideals of order, liberty, and intelligence. He will also find a fitness in the different Governments to the various degrees of civilization. The despotism of the Czar suits the ignorant Russian, while Republicanism best suits the intelligent Anglo-Saxon in North America; and what will surprise him much will be the large common ground which is occupied by Government both in Russia and America. In

like manner the Episcopal and Presbyterian polity, the rudimentary Church-life of the Bible Christians, and the pre-eminently elaborate system of Wesley, cover a wide area of common ground, and serve as true channels for the varying requirements of Christian Society.

This leads us to observe further, that the differences among Christians are not owing entirely to varieties of thought among individual believers. Another cause has co-operated with this and served not a little to deepen and indurate these differences —we refer to the influence of ecclesiastical organisations. When large bodies of professed Christians associated themselves in churches the framework of organisation that bound them together acquired an adventitious importance, and so questions of Church polity came to get a degree of importance they do not hold in the Bible. The clergy attached to those bodies came, by the force of circumstances, to spend much of their time in defending their ecclesiastical systems, and in the heat of controversy the small points of difference were magnified into essentials, and the lines drawn deep and broad around each church enclosure. The Episcopalian, to hold his own against the levelling system of the Presbyterian, had to develop a doctrine of Apostolical succession; and the Puritan, to hold his ground against the Quaker and Antinomian, had to formulate a rigid and metaphysical confession of faith. The exigencies of ecclesiastical warfare widened the differences between Christian sects, just as those of political warfare deepened the dislikes and dissimilarities between nations.

But we would ask those who assail the Bible, and with it the religion of Christ, on the ground of those dissensions, how they could possibly have been avoided in any revelation appealing to man as a moral and rational being? If Christ had merely established a system of ordinances, like Moses, it would have been possible to prevent differences and schisms among His followers, for any difficulty might have been solved by an appeal to the

bare letter of the commandment; but such a system would not have been the school of education that Christianity is: the very disputes about the teaching of the Bible lead to a vigorous exercise of the moral and rational faculties, and conduct man to a higher spiritual manhood than a leaden system of outward uniformity could do. A torpid uniformity in the Christian Church would have meant spiritual death; it is that which the Ultramontane party in the Church of Rome aims at: it would quench the light of individual conscience, and condense all religion into a slavish submission to the Papal decrees, and we see what its effects have been in all countries that have submitted to its sway. The stifled intellect and conscience of man, after a long slumber, have burst their bonds, and hating the very name of religion, have too often plunged into gross materialism. The constant ferment of religious opinion which the Bible is fitted to produce, and always will produce in any country where thought is free, is so far from being an objection against the Christian religion, that it is a proof of its divine origin. The Author of the human mind well knew that its faculties needed constant exercise to keep them bright, and that the doctrines of religion would take deepest root when they had to be received after diligent search, and defended with zeal; therefore He has seen it best to spread His truth in a large and free manner over the face of the Bible as He has spread plants and flowers over the face of nature, and there will be room in all time for theologians to classify and systematise the truths of the Bible, as there is room for botanists to group and arrange the herbs of the field; and we may add to complete the parallel, that there will always be room for minor differences between the systems of different thinkers, while in their great outlines they will exhibit a substantial unity.

But it may be objected by some, that these arguments prove too much: if the Bible be indeed so inexact in its statements, and capable of being honestly interpreted in so many different ways, is there not danger that the inquirer may miss "the way

of salvation?" does it not throw a cloud of doubt about all theology, and indeed disparage the Sacred Volume, for if God has not spoken clearly, then Christianity loses half its sanctions? There is no doubt that fears like these have led good men to claim for the Bible an exactness of definition it does not possess, and it has led the various schools of theology to fight for their special renderings with a vehemence that was only justified by the plea that they possessed the whole of the truth and that their opponents taught dangerous error. But we must guard ourselves from being misunderstood. We do not allege that the Bible speaks inexactly on the great truths that it is indispensable man should know; its voice is singularly clear and uniform on the essentials of religion. Man is ever represented as a sinner, and God as holy and just and good; the New Testament speaks habitually of Christ as the alone Mediator between God and man, and it holds no parley with the rejecter of Christ? it makes Him the Alpha and Omega of its teaching; it is as far apart from mere Deism as it is possible to suppose; there is not a line in the New Testament that casts doubt on the death of Christ, His resurrection and ascension, on the life to come, the future judgment, and the retribution awarded to all men; these great truths, and many others dependent upon them, among which we would specially mention the great doctrine of the Atonement, are written with the clearness of a sunbeam, and he that runneth may read. There is no difficulty whatever in the honest seeker after truth finding what the Scriptures teach on the essentials of salvation. That difficulties sometimes have been found, has arisen very much from the unreasonable claims of sects who have incorporated their points of difference, often very secondary ones, with the essentials of Christianity, and demanded the reception of all alike on the peril of outlawry. But the fault is with man, not with God; He has made His will sufficiently clear to those who will study it aright, and He has promised the Holy Spirit to those who seek His blessed influence.

And this leads us to remark that something more is needed than diligence and study to understand the Scriptures. No catechisms, formularies, or creeds can lodge a system of Divine truth in the soul of man; nay, it may be for this very reason that God has caused the Bible to be written in so unsystematic a manner; it may be to drive man to rely on the teaching of that Spirit of Truth which Christ promised to all believers, and of whom it is testified that "He will guide you into all truth." Hardly any doctrine is set forth more copiously than this, that man needs the teaching of the Spirit of God to enable him to understand the truth of God, and it is mere bibliolatry that would divorce the Bible from its living expositor. This fact takes away much of the difficulty that has been made of the inexactness of Scriptural language. Had the New Testament been framed like the ceremonial law, there would have been less use for the guidance of the Spirit; but written as it is, with many difficulties to the human mind, with many deep things hard to be understood, and with many simple things stated in a way that at first sight puzzles the understanding, there is abundant need for the teaching of that Spirit of whom it is said, "the deep things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." The beautiful consequence of this law is that humility is a primary requisite to the full understanding of Scripture. The proud self-reliant soul will not stoop to be taught of the Spirit; but the humble believer will grow rich in that knowledge which endures unto life eternal. "The natural man knoweth not the things of God, for they are foolishness unto him—but the spiritual man judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged by no man." We see, therefore, that it is the Word of God as interpreted by the Spirit of God that forms the groundwork of Christianity. It is neither alone; the Word divorced from the Spirit leads to hard scholastic theology; the Spirit divorced from the Word leads to mysticism. The union of the two gives a basis of dogmatic belief, combined with that pliancy and sweetness which form the complete Christian. When free play

is given to this two-fold revelation of God, there will not be vital differences among believers in Christ; there will no doubt be divergences upon minor points so long as man is a finite creature, with a limited understanding, but the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" will manifest itself by the brotherly love of Christians, and testify to the world that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

# RATIONALISM AND MIRACLES.

## CHRISTIANITY INSEPARABLY INTERWOVEN WITH MIRACLE.

WE now pass to another side of the Christian Controversy, which engrosses much attention at the present day. We refer to *the miraculous claims of Christianity.* There is a widespread aversion now-a-days to believe in miracles; the scientific mind finds in all departments of nature the evidence of law—of a uniform ordered course of events, and recoils from the thought that the Creator could ever have set aside His own laws. There is amongst many of our scientific men an invincible repugnance to receive what the Bible tells us of the miraculous doings of Christ, and immense ingenuity has been expended to eliminate this element from Christianity, without destroying its texture: it is thought that the moral and supernatural can be separated, and that Christianity can be retained while rejecting miracles. We believe this to be a delusion; miracle is so interwoven with the framework of the Bible that the two must stand or fall together, and that colourless compound, which may be extracted from the Scriptures, after all the supernatural is expunged, will never form the basis of a Divine religion.

We use here the terms miraculous and supernatural as synonymous for the sake of convenience, though they are not strictly so. The former is usually restricted to visible and external interference with the course of nature; whereas the latter properly applies to all divine manifestations transcending human experience; and thus some of Christ's sayings and doings may be termed supernatural, or, at least, superhuman, which are not strictly miraculous. But we are chiefly concerned here with the

objections urged against the miraculous events, properly so called, related in the new Testament.

One chief reason, we believe, why the philosophic imtellect has difficulty in assenting to these statements, besides the one already mentioned, is that so many alleged miracles have been proved historically to be false. All the heathen systems of religion, all the corrupt forms of Christianity, have put forward miraculous claims, most of which appear, at this day, transparently absurd. The Church of Rome has done much to abuse this source of influence. She has traded upon the superstitious element in man's nature to the utmost, and has fabricated so many false miracles, that it is not to be wondered at if hasty generalisers have refused credence to whatever savours of supernatural power.

But hasty generalisation is the fruitful source of many errors, and is, in an especial sense, the stumbling-block of the present day. Men who pretend to be philosophers take hasty glances at human history, and, perceiving well-marked tendencies of the human mind in the direction of superstition, conclude that all belief which transcends human reason must be superstitious. If they would follow the example of great physical investigators, and seek for reliable facts rather than theories, and refuse to generalise beyond what well-ascertained facts will warrant, they would show more diffidence in pronouncing that all miracle is impossible.

So far as mere *a priori* reasoning is concerned, we should be disposed to argue that just because the mind of man craves after miraculous attestation, therefore God, in making a revelation, would accredit it by miracle. He would adapt Himself to the laws of man's mind, and bring that evidence before it which was best fitted to satisfy it; and no one who knows anything of psychology will deny that wherever man believes in miracle he instinctively sees the hand of God, and nothing else so effectually awes him into submission to a higher power.

If it be once granted that God has made a revelation at all, it

is most natural and fitting that He should attest it by supernatural means; indeed, we know no other way in which a divine religion could be introduced into an unbelieving world—a religion most unpalatable to the human mind, and relying entirely upon moral force for its diffusion. The miracles of Christ, so far from being out of harmony with His mission, are indeed necessary to give it completeness and credibility. If He indeed came from God, and went to God as He alleged, and was commissioned to announce new and startling truths hateful to the teachers of the day, was it not most reasonable that He should appeal to His Father in heaven for miraculous confirmation of His authority, and was it not most reasonable that God should answer that appeal? Surely, if the Christian religion is from God at all, it is worthy of being attested by miracles. It has to do with the most vital interests of man, and if God thought it essential for man to know it, why should He refuse that attestation which He could easily give, and without which it would be impossible to secure credence for it among mankind? It appears to us that the repugnance to miracles is closely connected with a repugnance to believe in a personal and living God. Whenever the mind fully receives the idea of God as a living, conscious Being, having a will and affections, as He is represented in the Bible to have, belief in miracles, when properly attested, naturally follows; for it is impossible to believe that such a God as this would refuse to manifest Himself to man in the way that man's faculties can most surely apprehend Him. The disbelievers in miracles are in a great degree disbelievers in God—probably to a much greater extent than they are aware of, or would admit to be true. The God they believe in is a pantheistic abstraction or a figurative expression for the laws of nature—as Matthew Arnold has lately defined it to be, "the stream of tendency which all things have to fulfil the law of their being." Their idea of God is not very far removed from atheism; He is one who shrouds Himself amid nature's laws, and sits far away, passionless and serene, like the Olympian

deities of Homer, who quaffed Nectar and feasted on Ambrosia, regardless of the sufferings of man. He is, in fact, the slave of nature, not its ruler; for He cannot suspend the laws He has set in motion, He cannot speak to man in audible accents, as that, forsooth, would be a departure from the etiquette of the universe! Better that man should perish than that God should stepout of the eternal silence to speak to his immortal soul. If the Bible tells us anything at all, it tells us that God is above nature and apart from nature, and it proves this in the only way which could ever have carried conviction to the ordinary human mind, viz., by miraculous interposition.

It has always appeared to us an unaccountable fact that men of intelligence and moral worth should hold that the Christian religion is in some sense divine, and yet reject all that savours of the miraculous. There are many who go to the New Testament for moral teaching, and allow that Jesus Christ revealed more of God's mind than any prophet the world has seen, and yet regard as fabulous all His claims to supernatural power and all the miraculous doings recorded of Him. We hold that it is utterly impossible to separate the historical veracity of the New Testament from its moral and spiritual teaching: they are interwoven in so close an embrace that they cannot be severed without mutual destruction. Mankind would never submit to the life of self-denial imposed by Christ if they were to think that He claimed powers that were fictitious; the sanction of His authority would be gone, the spell would be dissolved in an instant that taught men to die for His religion, the whole domain of revelation would be relegated to the limbo of uncertainty, and all efficient motive withdrawn to a life of holiness. The absolute truthfulness of Christ is a first condition to the reception of His teaching, and not merely His absolute truthfulness, but the sanction of His divine authority; it is the feeling that He speaks with the voice of God, and will one day be the Judge of men, which triumphs over man's inclination to evil.

Those know little of the struggles and self-denial that a life of faith imposes, who think that it can be sustained by a Christ who was full of illusions and errors. When He requires that we should pluck out our right eye and cut off our right hand rather than let them offend us, who would listen to the injunction, if the voice that spoke was that of an erring mortal? When He commands us to run counter to the strongest currents of our nature, who would have grace to obey if none believed the Teacher to be divine? His teaching would be less weighty than that of Socrates and Seneca, indeed infinitely less; for they laid claim to no *imaginary* powers: they delivered their message with much weight of learning and with undoubted sincerity of aim; but Christ did not deign to avail Himself of human learning at all, and, according to this monstrous theory, enforced His teaching by pretended miracles, or, at least, by conniving at those who did so. To our mind, a more impossible theory was never imagined than that of a teacher charged with the most weighty truth, loving the souls of men even to the death, and yet fighting with the weapons of grossest deception.

But some allege that Christ was Himself the victim of deception. He imagined He had miraculous power, and the ready credulity of the age ratified the claim. We are asked to contemplate the great Teacher, whose words penetrated the depths of man's nature, so weak as to suppose that He raised the dead and walked on the waves, while yet He was innocent of any power beyond what a spiritualist lays claim to now-a-days. The proposition needs only to be stated to be scouted with disgust; it outrages, not merely all Christian feeling, but all reverence for truth that abides in the human breast.

The only theory which deserves to be seriously examined, is that which denies that Christ ever did or claimed to do anything miraculous, and that all the miracles recorded in the New Testament are the accretions of a later age that have gathered round the central figure. We are invited by this school to

conceive of an ideal Christ, who taught moral truth, and exerted such influence by the purity of His life that His followers canonised Him, and surrounded Him, in after ages, with a corona of miracle, and put into His lips language He never uttered.

This theory finds favour with many who have never weighed the excessive improbabilities it involves, or who shut their eyes to these improbabilities because they are blinded by prejudice. We venture to say that if they were to take the New Testament in their hand, and run the pen through every passage that would need to be expunged or altered on this theory, they would be astonished to find the consequences it involved them in, and if they would go further and re-write the Gospel narrative on this improved pattern, we venture to predict that few honest men could avoid one or other of these alternatives—either reject as hopeless nonsense a book and religion so charged with falsehood, or reject the theory that involved such dreadful conclusions.

### THE CHIEF MIRACLE OF ALL—THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST—THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

But we will go into the matter more minutely, and attempt to show, in detail, some of the consequences that must be faced, if all the miraculous and supernatural element be expunged from the New Testament; and we will first deal with that foundation-stone of the Christian religion—the alleged resurrection of Christ. We are willing to take this as a crucial test, believing that if it be untrue, the whole fabric of Christianity falls to the ground, and if it can be established, the other miracles recorded become both natural and credible.

Now, if it be untrue that Christ rose from the dead, the following difficulties must be faced. The four Evangelists all give a minute and particular account of the Resurrection, differing it is true, in some trifling details, but agreeing in all the leading

features, and bearing every internal evidence of truthfulness. The very discrepancies show that there was no collusion between the writers, but that each described what he had seen or heard from his own point of view. The Evangelists themselves were either apostles who knew Christ intimately, or companions of the Apostles, and perfectly familiar with all that these knew about their Master, and who evidently wrote from the fulness of their knowledge. We are to suppose, then, that these godly men invented this pious fraud, and somehow palmed it off on the multitudes who embraced the Christian faith a few years after Christ's death; and we are further to believe that all the Apostles themselves conspired to propagate the fiction, and that they went about narrating everywhere that they had seen Christ repeatedly after His resurrection, that they had eaten and drunk with Him, handled Him, listened to His voice, and finally beheld Him, with their own eyes, ascending to Heaven from the Mount of Olives. We are further to believe that they invented a whole system of doctrines, based upon the resurrection of Christ, and that they went about the world proclaiming this as essential to the salvation of men, appealing to God in the most solemn manner, to sanction the falsehood, and willing to endure persecution, and to lay down life itself in attestation of the lie. We are further to believe that they taught this fabulous story so connectedly and harmoniously that their followers never detected any disagreement, or suspected them of inventing it. Though Peter and Paul and James are recorded to have differed on ceremonial questions, and to have had sharp disputes, yet we are to believe that they never suffered a hint to escape them in one unguarded moment, that their story of the resurrection was a myth; nay, that they kept the secret so well during their whole lives that a great multitude of believers, in all parts of the world, received it as the corner-stone of their religion, many of whom suffered and died for it, and not one of whom that we know of ever doubted it; and the countless millions of believers

who have followed have all shared this delusion, lived in the belief that the risen Saviour was at God's right hand, and had given them in His resurrection a pledge that they would likewise rise from their graves.

Again, we have the memorable circumstance that the Gospel narratives all record the Resurrection in a way that reflects discredit on the Apostles themselves. They are represented as having received from Christ Himself in His lifetime several intimations of His approaching death and resurrection, and yet when He was betrayed they all forsook Him and fled; and Peter, His boldest follower, denied Him thrice with oaths: and so entirely did they lose confidence in their Master, that when He rose from the grave they were utterly incredulous, and refused to believe till Christ had showed Himself to them several times in the most unmistakeable manner. How came it that the Apostles allowed such a discreditable version to get afloat if the whole affair was a concoction of their own? Was ever such an absurdity known as a body of men inventing a stupendous fiction, and then narrating it so as to mortify their self-esteem in the most poignant manner? Had they narrated the resurrection in such a way as to set forth their own glory, or secure some earthly advantage for themselves, it might have been maintained with some show of reason that they had conspired to delude the world; but that they should have invented this lie, and told it, in a way most humiliating to themselves, and submitted to be treated as the offscourings of the earth all the rest of their lives, simply to hoax mankind, is a theory so preposterous that we marvel any man should hold it who has not parted company with his reason or his conscience.

But we will put aside this theory of wilful imposture, and deal with another alternative—that of unconscious illusion on the part of the Evangelists and all the twelve. This is the favourite view of modern rationalists; they have boundless faith in human credulity, and have no difficulty in reconciling the purest

moral teaching with the most complete hallucination. They hold that the disciples of Christ were the victims of their heated imaginations, or as some of them would put it, so impregnated with Messianic expectations that they fancied they saw Christ after He was risen, and dreamed the beautiful myth of His ascension from the Mount of Olives. What a mass of absurdities this theory brings to view! These men, so godly, so simple in their lives, so truthlike in all their statements, so utterly unlike the visionary in their entire cast of character—these men, so matter of fact in their mental constitution that they were always misunderstanding their Master when He spoke in parables, and needed to question Him whenever He used figurative language—these men so slow to learn spiritual truths, so carnal in their first conceptions of Christ's Kingdom, we are to conceive of, as with one consent dreaming the wildest dream that ever entered the mind of man—a dream of an empty tomb, of a vision of angels, of an apparition of their Master during forty days, of His dialogue with Thomas, of that unbelieving disciple thrusting his hands into the prints of the nails, and lastly of their Master's ascension to heaven! These simple and guileless men, most of them rustics from Galilee, are somehow all to imagine they saw these things, and all to relate them with unvarying uniformity during their life time, and to teach them with such evident sincerity that the Church of Christ from that day to this has never doubted them! We are further to suppose that the Apostle Paul was the victim of sheer hallucination when he saw the heavenly vision, that he was changed from being the bitter persecutor of the Christians to their greatest champion, all through a piece of phantasmagoria, that, in fact, his whole mind and character were changed as by the spell of an enchanter? So removed is the process from all that we know of human life and conduct, that we find ourselves involuntarily thinking of Aladdin's lamp or the wand of Circe; for surely no poet of romance ever dreamed of sorcery more unearthly than those men of pure reason who transform Saul the

bigoted pharisee into Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles by a stroke of the magician's wand! Surely, to these modern ideologists nothing is impossible! That Pio Nono should dream a dream some night and the next day awake a follower of John Wesley, with a complete, well-balanced Protestant creed, would appear nothing impossible!—that he should go about the world denouncing his former life as wicked and his former religion as false—that he should submit to intense privations in defence of his new creed, and finally lay down his life for it—would all prove nothing as to the soundness of his convictions, nor involve the necessity of believing for a moment that he gave a true account of the method of his conversion! This marvellous phenomenon could all be explained by supposing a mental hallucination! Truly, in their eyes the region of spiritual ideas is a region of enchantment!—it lies far above and beyond all rules of evidence, all rational and moral considerations! They have no difficulty in conceiving that the acute and logical mind of Paul should have performed a somersault in a single hour, abjured the faith of his prime and taught a system the exact contrary of it for the remaining thirty years of his life; that this system should have been reasoned out with such convincing power as to mould Christian theology for all time, and enforced with such self-sacrifice as none but the Master Himself ever surpassed; and yet the basis of this sublime life, of this marvellous edifice of Christian doctrine, was the fantastic dream that one day at noon the Lord Jesus spoke to him from heaven!

We envy not those whose spiritual diagnosis is so grotesque; we envy not those moral perceptions which can praise the great Apostle, and convict him in the same breath of being a lunatic. We have difficulty in conceiving on what foundation they would plant morality at all, when they hold that the best religion may be taught on a basis of puerile fiction! In what respect is St. Paul to be placed above Joe Smith or Joanna Southcote, not to speak of Mahomet, if his story of the heavenly vision is non-

sense, and all his teaching about the resurrection a fable? They will say that his morality is purer; but even that may be questioned, for, on their theory, he taught men to cast away their earthly goods, to face the disruption of family, to risk life itself—all for belief in a myth. As Demetrius the silversmith truly said, he turned the whole world upside down; and, as he himself said more truly still, "If Christ be not raised . . . ye are yet in your sins . . . and we are, of all men, most miserable." He did indeed fill the world with confusion, and brought nothing but privation and earthly loss to the followers of the new religion, and it would be a strange sort of morality if it were to be held that all this could rightfully be accomplished by preaching the illusion of a fevered brain!

Nothing is more remarkable with this School of Scepticism than their Proteus-like habit of changing their front; no sooner are they dislodged from one position than they take up another, and when you think you have caught them on one or other horn of a dilemma—alas! vain thought, they escape under a new disguise.

There are some who hold that the Apostles neither believed nor taught the resurrection at all, but simply repeated the moral teachings of Christ; and that the Gospel narratives are superstitious legends.

We feel, in contemplating this theory, as if history were dissolving into cloudland, as if the solid earth were leaving our feet, and all things melting into primeval chaos; we feel as though we were confronted by the assertion that Alexander never conquered Persia, or fought with Darius,—that his very existence was doubtful; that Curtius and Arrian, Plutarch and Diodorus invented the story of his career, as Homer may have imagined the adventures of Ulysses, or Tennyson the "Idylls of the King!" But we dare not dismiss this last conceit with mere irony; we must probe it to the bottom and unmask its absurdity.

Two out of the four Gospels are professedly written by

apostles, viz., Matthew and John; but as the authorship of the last is impugned by some modern sceptics, we will, for our present purpose, not insist upon it. The first Gospel has always been allowed to be the work of the apostle whose name it bears. But even that point we are willing to forego, for the purpose of this argument, and we will meet our opponents on their own ground, that the writers of the four Gospels are unknown. Their theory is, that those accounts are a mixture of truth and fable, and that all the miracles, and especially the resurrection, are creations of an age subsequent to the Apostolic. But the difficulty at once arises, how can the Gospels, and especially the first three, be the product of a late age, when we find them largely quoted by the earliest Church fathers—by men who flourished within a century to a century and a-half of the death of Christ? They were quoted as holy Scripture by men like Justyn-Martyr and Irenæus, who take it for granted in their writings that they were the recognized code of the Christian Church. It is self-evident that the three first Gospels at least belonged to a very early age. They must have been written, if not in the lifetime of the Apostles, at the very latest in the lifetime of those who succeeded the Apostles. This is a fact which it is impossible for men to deny who know anything of historical criticism. We can now measure the credibility of this theory, which imputes to the writers of those Gospels the fabrication of the story of the Resurrection, a story which, according to them, the Apostles never taught at all. We are to suppose that the whole Christian Church scattered round the shores of the Mediterranean, and formed by the personal teaching of the Apostles, and especially of St. Paul, should be unable to detect in the following generation so gross an imposition as this—that they should receive narratives as sacred, teach them as the Word of God, and make them the rule of the universal Church, which narratives were totally different from the oral teaching of the Apostles some thirty or

forty before. Is it not preposterous to suppose that the teaching of the Apostles should be so entirely lost in their lifetime, that a fabulous version of it should gain ascendancy all over the Christian Church, and that the true account should be so wholly lost that not a trace has come down to us? That is the consequence we must face if we are to suppose that the Apostles never taught the Resurrection of Christ nor the other miracles, and that these were invented by the mendacious writers of the four Gospels. But this is only one side of the case. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul all testify to the truth of the Gospel narratives; and the genuineness of most of them has never been seriously called in question. Indeed many of the Epistles of Paul can be proved to be his by a chain of evidence as clear as the Æneid can be traced to Virgil or the Commentaries of the Conquest of Gaul to Julius Cæsar. It is perfectly clear from them, even if the four Gospels be put out of court, that the resurrection was taught by the Apostles, and was, indeed, the corner-stone of their edifice. We can hardly bring ourselves to suppose that any man of intelligence and moral sense can really believe that the companions and Apostles of Christ did not teach the doctrine of the Resurrection; and we have only noticed this theory because it has been hastily put forward to shelter men from believing anything definite regarding the facts of the Christian religion.

It is indeed, as certain as anything in the past can be, that the Apostles taught the Resurrection of our Saviour as a fact, which they were cognisant of by their bodily senses, and as sure of as they were of their own existence; and not only did the twelve witness this fact, but St. Paul affirms that five hundred brethren beheld the risen Lord, most of whom were still living at the time he wrote. Building upon this undoubted foundation, we hold that he who denies the Resurrection of our Lord denies a historical fact, resting upon indubitable evidence; nay, he does violence to his own moral nature, for he forces his mind into an

unnatural posture, before he can extort from his understanding a verdict so opposed to the laws of evidence. We maintain that an unbeliever who has so warped his mind as to deny the Resurrection, after studying the subject in all its bearings, must have arrived at that point where the confines of truth and falsehood are lost, and the power of discerning moral evidence is fatally impaired.

### THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST IN KEEPING WITH HIS CHARACTER AND CLAIMS.

We now pass from the Resurrection of Christ to the miracles He is recorded to have wrought, and, supposing that the former is proved, we hold that the latter can readily be shown to follow as a natural sequence. The Resurrection of our Lord at once stamps Him as a being transcendently glorious: it does not in itself prove Him to be divine, because He was not the first or only one recorded in the Bible to have risen from the grave, but it puts God's stamp upon the truth of His teaching, and the validity of His claims; for who can suppose for a moment the Most High would have wrought so great a miracle on behalf of one whose teaching was untrue, or even partially true, or who laboured under an illusion as to his person and mission? Would not that be making Almighty God an accessory to a scheme for duping mankind? The thing is revolting. If God suspended the fundamental laws of nature, and unbarred the gates of death for the sake of Him who claimed to be His only begotten and well-beloved Son, it was to ratify these claims, and demonstrate them for all time to be absolutely true; for it must be remembered that the fact of the resurrection stood in unique relation to Christ; He had staked His character, so to speak, upon that great event; He had repeatedly foretold it to His disciples, and spoken of it in connection with His Crucifixion as the supreme work of His life, and the accomplishment of the grand purpose

of God, foretold in the Scriptures, for the redemption of mankind. Christ Himself submitted, so to speak, the genuineness of His work to this crucial test. Had He remained in the tomb, mankind would have known that one more fanatic had been exposed; but in His glorious resurrection and ascension to heaven the stamp of Divine authority was placed for all time upon the work and words of our Redeemer.

When this view of the Resurrection is once admitted into the mind, the miracles of Christ appear the natural outcome of His work. They appear entirely in keeping with His person and character. Surely, if He was the Son of God in that transcendent sense He claimed—a sense so far above what any mere human being could aspire to, that the Jews founded upon it a charge of blasphemy, and adjudged Him to death on that account alone, then it would be most reasonable that He should show that power over nature which His disciples had a right to expect. And we find accordingly that Christ constantly appeals to His works on behalf of His Messiahship. His language was —"If ye believe not Me, believe My works," and this appeal sufficed for the common people, for they followed him in crowds, marvelling at the wonderful works He did, and acclaiming Him "the Son of David." The whole Gospel narrative becomes unintelligible without these miracles. It is impossible to believe that one brought up in the house of a carpenter till He was thirty years of age could, in three short years, have convulsed Palestine, and founded a new religion of such marvellous vitality, without miracles. Had He done so much merely by delivering moral aphorisms, it would have been the greatest miracle the world ever saw!

Then, the miracles of Christ are unlike the creations of human fancy; they are not vain displays of power, like the legends of superstition, but are all wrought for healing and beneficent purposes. They are never obtruded merely to frighten bystanders, or even silence gainsayers; they are never associated

with the semblance of boasting, or with any of those motives which mere human fancy draws upon to account for miracles; they fall with perfect appropriateness into the scheme of His life; they are like Christ, and like Christ only of all beings that have appeared upon this earth; and we deny that all the genius of man could have invented such a set of miracles as are recorded in the New Testament, or grouped them in such a harmonious manner around the person of our Redeemer. His miracles, like His sayings, are Christlike, and have no parallel in the history of mankind; and His whole personality is so unique that it is folly to talk of it as an emanation from the brains of His followers.

But we wish to call special attention to the fact that the miracles of Christ are inseparably connected with His sayings, and that it is impossible to reject the one and hold on to the other. His miracles are quite as credible as His sayings; and it is clear that, if the former are untrue, the latter must also be so. It is a common view of deists, that Christ simply taught men their duty towards God, keeping Himself in the background; but this is quite opposed to the Gospel narratives. We find in all of them that much of Christ's teaching related to Himself, to His person, His mission, and its results. He insists upon Himself being the promised Messiah, and makes the admission of His personal authority the touchstone of discipleship. He says to Peter, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" and when Peter replies, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," He answers, "Simon Barjona, flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven." In that most solemn description of the Last Judgment, given in the 25th chapter of Matthew, He describes Himself in the most striking language as the Judge of mankind, and pronounces doom on every human being, according as they have done it unto the least of these His brethren. He uniformly assumes the right of forgiving men's

sins, and reading their secret thoughts. He makes faith in Himself the absolute condition of salvation, and expressly forbids any attempt to approach the Father except through Him. "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." He describes Himself as the perfect likeness of the Father. He says to Philip, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father, and why sayest thou then, show us the Father?" In that solemn moment, when He stood before Caiaphas, with the shadow of the cross falling athwart His path, He abated not a jot of His claims; "nevertheless ye shall see the Son of man standing at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." When the last scene closes, and He ascends to His Father from Mount Olivet, His parting words were, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This claim to supernatural powers runs through the whole of Christ's teaching, and yet it is combined in so marvellous a fashion with a life of humiliation, and so steady a refusal to use these powers for any purpose of self-aggrandisement, that we are constrained to say, with the Roman Centurion, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

It is, however, a fact—surprising though it be—that men are to be found who appear to have drunk into the Spirit of Christ, who yet reject the miracles of the New Testament, and, indeed, question the authenticity of the whole framework of Christianity. The hyper-refinement of our day has developed an extraordinary type of mind—a hybrid, so to speak, between reason and mysticism; and it would be unfair to deny that gleams of Divine light have reached the souls of some, from the glorious person of Christ, who yet question the truth of the Gospel

narratives. But the great mistake they make—and many have fallen into it—is this: they hold that the Christian religion may be universally taught in this mystical way, and that mankind may learn a purer faith by exploding its historical and dogmatic basis. That this is an entire delusion we have not the shadow of a doubt; and that it is held by a few high-minded men, who have imbibed many of the precepts of Christ, we attribute to the common mistake of judging of universal human nature by the phenomena of one's own mind. This mystical Christianity, which they hold, is only rendered possible by the atmosphere of genuine belief which surrounds them. Were it not that the historical facts of Christianity are lodged in the public mind, and supply the motives to the great bulk of the earnest Christian life that exists, it would not be possible for even these few men to live on the ethereal essence they have sublimed out of the system. They are quite unconsciously paying homage to the atmosphere of orthodox belief, which they inhale, despite their efforts to the contrary, and without which their visionary systems would crumble into dust. If they could succeed in demolishing the historic and doctrinal foundation of Christianity, and reduce it to that nebulous substance they profess to revere, they would be astonished to find even their platform of belief slipping from under their feet; they would discover, when too late, that they had unchained the tempest; and having loosened the only hold that religion can have on common minds—viz., an undoubting belief in its truth, they would stand aghast to see the rush of wickedness that would fill the vacant ground. Their flimsy theories would be swept away like cobwebs; having "sown the wind they would reap the whirlwind." It is not impossible for a set of philosophic Deists to exist in the midst of a Christian community, holding the moral precepts of Christianity, and influenced powerfully by the ideal beauty of Christ; but it is quite impossible for their descendants to hold the same ground, if the

common framework of belief were swept away. No ungodly man could reach Christian faith by the devious path they climbed. It is possible to begin by a simple faith, and end in philosophic abstractions; but it is contrary to experience to begin by abstractions and end in simple faith. The Encyclopedists, who preceded the French Revolution, taught doctrines subversive of all authority, human and divine; but they clothed them in so graceful an attire, that no one, not even themselves, suspected the awful consequences they would lead to. Were they not sublime philosophers who could plant religion and morality on better foundations than priestcraft had done! So thought they, and so thought the shallow generation that applauded their wit; but when their destructive principles sunk into the minds of the common people, what a hell was let loose! Superstition, forsooth, was overthrown, but—horrid substitute!—a harlot was installed as goddess of reason; and from that day to this French intellectual society has drifted to and fro in the dreary sea of Atheism, ever putting forward new theories of religion, which follow each other like bubbles on the surface of a stream. It is well shown there how hopeless it is to construct a religion when once the roots of simple faith are cut off. Having destroyed belief in God's revelation, French philosophers may revolve in vicious circles to the end of time without discovering a substitute. They may denounce in bitterest language the vices that corrupt the nation, but they will never reach the only true remedy—the conscience awakened to the voice of God; and regeneration, if it ever come to that unbelieving and dissolute race, must be on the old lines of "The Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." We conclude our argument on miracles by observing that those who seek to discredit them, are trying to pull down one of the chief buttresses of the Christian religion; and we would address to them a warning, like that which Gamaliel gave to the Chief Priests of the Jews: "Refrain from

this thing, and let it alone, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

### ARGUMENT FOR CHRISTIANITY FROM THE GRANDEUR OF ITS HOPES.

A convincing argument in favour of the Christian religion is *the incomparable grandeur of the hopes which it opens to mankind.* Alone, of all the shrines at which man has worshipped, does it afford a sure and blessed hope of immortality. The heathen religions had only dim forebodings of the future state; the life to come was rather a theme for poets than an influential belief; indeed, it had so weak a hold, even on philosophers, that the Scripture simply expresses the truth when it declares that "life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel." Till the Resurrection of Christ had unbarred the gates of death, there was no vital belief in the life to come among the Gentiles, and but a feeble one among the Jews. From that time forth the immortality of the soul has been an axiom wherever the Gospel of Christ has been received. And how vastly superior to the pictures of human fancy is the Christian revelation of the future state? Compare the Elysian fields of Virgil or the sensual Paradise of Mahomet with the New Jerusalem of revelation. In the first we have the Trojan heroes pursuing their former sports amid shady groves, and amusing themselves with horses and armour, the copies of what they did battle with on earth. The Mahomedan falls below even the Pagan ideal; for his Heaven is one of gross physical indulgence, where all the appetites of the body are gratified on an exaggerated scale. But hark what the seer of Patmos beheld of the Christians' Home in Glory. "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a great voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell

with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." Again, "He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God, having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal. . . . And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it, and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there, and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it, and there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

Where shall we find, outside the book of inspiration, imagery so sublime as this? Where shall we find hopes so fitted to elevate the soul of man, and carry it triumphantly across the dark river of death? The Christian religion alone of all others has stripped the charnel-house of its terrors, and enabled the believer to say, "O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?" Contrast with these joyful expectations the cold and feeble light which Deism casts upon the grave; it shuts out of view the Resurrection of Christ, for its system is complete without it; it bases its hopes of immortality upon the dim gropings after a future state which reason and the light of nature supply; but it has no comfort to offer the trembling soul about to depart, naked and solitary, into the presence of that Holy One whose eye cannot look upon iniquity; it has no Saviour to pre-

sent to the burdened conscience, shrinking from the disclosure of all its past life to the Judge from whom nothing can be hid. It exhorts to a general trust in the mercy of God; but the soul wants something stronger to lean upon ; it craves after the sure Word of God, and this is found nowhere except in Holy Writ. Weak and feeble are the best consolations that human philosophy can offer to the dying, compared with these weighty words which inspired wisdom has placed on record. Nowhere can the value of our religion be tested better than at that supreme crisis ; if it is worth any thing it is a sheet-anchor then. Who ever heard of a dying Christian repenting of his religion ; who ever knew of one regretting that he had loved Christ too much, and served Him too well ! Can the same be said of the votaries of Deism ? We have heard strange tales of the last hours of Voltaire, of Rousseau, of Tom Paine, and even of that cold-blooded sceptic David Hume. We question if many opponents of Christianity, standing on the confines of eternity, have viewed their past life with satisfaction ; we question if any, with their life to spend over again, would choose to have it the same. We are certain that many would gladly change lots with the dying Christian.

The fact is, Christianity comes in with Divine power just at the point where all forms of human religion break down. It faces boldly the mysteries connected with death, and gloriously solves them. Other religions are confounded at the dreary contrast between the goodness of God and the painful dissolution of the creatures He has made. They cannot explain it on their theories of universal benevolence; but the Bible steps in and tells the story of man's fall and God's remedy. It shows us the holiness of God in such dazzling purity that human corruption appears doubly dark, and the necessity is made plain of a release from this body of sin and death, in order that "this corruptible may put on incorruption and this mortal immortality."

We do not deny that there are mysteries even in the Bible account of man's state and destiny; but they are less, far less

than those which any form of human philosophy must contend with. The Bible does not create these difficulties; they existed antecedent to it, and baffled all the wisdom of antiquity. The Bible aids us vastly in their solution, but it does not wholly remove them. Nor is this to be wondered at. The infinite mind of God, as we already remarked, can only be revealed in part to the feeble comprehension of finite man. We only "see through a glass darkly." The Bible illumines the point of contact between God and man; but the lines that proceed from this point stretch into unknown regions, and as God has revealed nothing merely to satisfy curiosity, we soon lose ourselves when we attempt to reason on those deep subjects which do not directly concern us. That evil should be permitted to exist at all is an insoluble mystery. The Bible does not unravel it, and it is no discredit to it that it does not make the attempt. But it shows how it may be got rid of, so far as each individual soul is concerned; and the remainder of the mystery we must leave to that time when "we shall see face to face;" and we may feel sure that then there will be ample ground for that adoring song with which the great multitude surround the throne, "who have come out of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, and who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb."

A great part of the difficulties that surround the Christian revelation disappears when the principle of faith is allowed its proper place in the heart. Rationalism rebels against this. How can I believe what I cannot understand? is its cry. It takes up a combative position from the very first, and allows no truth to enter the spiritual faculties that has not first passed the narrow gateway of man's finite reason. But God addresses Himself directly to man's spiritual nature. He knows that it can respond directly, and can verify the truth of what He says by tests sufficient for the real requirements of our nature. God does not seek in the Bible to do violence to our rational constitu-

tion. It is a false faith that seeks to crush the clear verdict of reason; and He who created the human mind is careful not to hurt its powers when He appeals to our spiritual nature; but still the truth is clearly stated in the Bible that "The natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, nor can know them, because they are spiritually discerned," and for this reason it is vain to expect to explain away every difficulty that mere human reason may start against the Christian scheme. This permanent cause of unbelief resides in the carnal mind of man, and often the only answer that can be given to its questionings is, "Thus saith the Lord." This does not dispense us from seeking to remove all obstacles that will yield to learning and research; but it will guard against the illusion that all cavils will be silenced, or even all honest difficulties set at rest by any explanations it lies in the power of the Christian apologist to render. The last and final appeal of Christianity is to the soul enlightened by the Spirit of God; and we make bold to say that no one who has searched the Scriptures in devout submission to the Divine will, has failed to find them "given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

# APPENDIX.

IT has been thought desirable to subjoin some extracts from the Apocryphal Gospels and Epistles, in order to show the amazing contrast they present in their puerile fables and conceits to the dignity and simplicity of the inspired volume.

The selections are made from the writings of most repute in primitive times, and which were believed to come nearest in point of antiquity to the contents of our New Testament.

Were the inspiration of Scripture made to rest on internal evidence alone, a powerful argument might be drawn from the startling inferiority of these writings. No unprejudiced reader can fail to see how different is the utterance of men filled with the Holy Ghost, from the childish fancies of the monkish authors of these legends.

(*From the Gospel of the Birth of Mary*, ch. iv.)

THE DEDICATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

AND when three years were expired, and the time of her weaning complete, they brought the Virgin to the temple of the Lord with offerings. And there was about the temple, according to the fifteen Psalms of degrees, fifteen stairs to ascend. For the temple being built in a mountain, the altar of burnt-offering, which was without, could not be come near but by stairs; the parents of the blessed Virgin and infant Mary put her upon one of these stairs; but while they were putting off their clothes, in which they had travelled, and according to

custom putting on some that were more neat and clean, in the meantime the Virgin of the Lord, in such a manner, went up all the stairs one after another, without the help of any to lead her or lift her, that any one would have judged from hence, that she was of perfect age. Thus the Lord did, in the infancy of his Virgin, work this extraordinary work, and evidence by this miracle how great she was like to be hereafter. But the parents having offered up their sacrifice, according to the custom of the law, and perfected their vow, left the Virgin with other virgins in the apartments of the temple, who were to be brought up there, and they returned home.

(*From the Protevangelium*, ch. xvi.)

HEROD DESTROYS THE BABES IN BETHLEHEM, AND MURDERS ZACHARIAS.

THEN Herod, perceiving that he was mocked by the wise men, and being very angry, commanded certain men to go and to kill all the children that were in Bethlehem, from two years old and under. But Mary hearing that the children were to be killed, being under much fear, took the child, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in an ox-manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Elizabeth also, hearing that her son John was about to be searched for, took him and went up into the mountains, and looked around for a place to hide him; and there was no secret place to be found. Then she groaned within herself, and said, O mountain of the Lord, receive the mother with the child. For Elizabeth could not climb up. And instantly the mountain was divided and received them. And there appeared to them an angel of the Lord to preserve them.

But Herod made search after John, and sent servants to Zacharias, when he was (ministering) at the altar, and said unto him, Where hast thou hid thy son? He replied to them, I am a minister of God, and a servant at the altar: how should I know where my son is? So the servants went back, and told Herod the whole; at which he was incensed, and said, Is not this son of his like to be king in Israel? He sent therefore again his servants to Zacharias, saying, Tell us the truth, where is thy son, for you know that your life is in my hand. So the servants went and told him all this: but Zacharias replied to them, I am a martyr for God, and if ye shed my blood, the Lord will receive my soul. Besides know that ye shed innocent blood. However, Zacharias was murdered in the entrance of the temple and altar, and about the partition; But the children of Israel knew not when he was killed.

Then at the hour of salutation the priests went into the temple, but Zacharias did not according to custom meet them and bless them; Yet they still continued waiting for him to salute them; and when they found he did not in a long time come, one of them ventured into the holy place where the altar was, and he saw blood lying upon the ground congealed; when, behold a voice from heaven said, Zacharias is murdered, and his blood shall not be wiped away, until the revenger of his blood come. But when he heard this, he was afraid, and went forth and told the priests what he had seen and heard; and they all went in, and saw the fact. Then the roofs of the temple howled, and were rent from the top to the bottom: and they could not find the body, but only blood made hard like stone. And they went away, and told the people, that Zacharias was murdered, and all the tribes of Israel heard thereof, and mourned for him, and lamented three days. Then the priests took counsel together concerning a person to succeed him. And Simeon and the other priests cast lots, and the lot fell upon Simeon. For he had been assured by the Holy Spirit, that he should not die, till he had seen Christ come in the flesh.

(*From the first Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ*, ch. iv.)

### THE INFANT JESUS TAKEN DOWN TO EGYPT BY JOSEPH AND MARY.

Now Herod perceiving that the wise men did delay, and not return to him, called together the priests and wise men and said, Tell me in what place the Christ should be born? And when they replied, in Bethlehem, a city of Judæa, he began to contrive in his own mind the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. But an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in his sleep, and said, Arise, take the child and his mother, and go into Egypt as soon as the cock grows. So he arose, and went.

And as he was considering with himself about his journey, the morning came upon him. In the length of the journey the girth of the saddle broke. And now he drew near to a great city, in which there was an idol, to which the other idols and gods of Egypt brought their offerings and vows. And there was by this idol a priest ministering to it, who, as often as Satan spoke out of that idol, related the things he said to the inhabitants of Egypt, and those countries. This priest had a son three years old, who was possessed with a great multitude of devils, who uttered many strange things, and when the devils seized him, walked about naked with his clothes torn throwing stones at those whom he saw. Near to that idol was

the inn of the city, into which when Joseph and St Mary were come and had turned into that inn, all the inhabitants of the city were astonished. And all the magistrates and priests of the idols assembled before that idol, and made inquiry there, saying, What mean all this consternation, and dread, which has fallen upon all our country? The idol answered them, The unknown God is come hither, who is truly God; nor is there any one besides him, who is worthy of divine worship; for he is truly the Son of God. At the fame of him this country trembled, and at his coming it is under the present commotion and consternation, and we ourselves are affrighted by the greatness of his power. At the same instant this idol fell down, and at his fall all the inhabitants of Egypt, besides others, ran together.

But the son of the priest, when his usual disorder came upon him, going into the inn, found there Joseph and St Mary, whom all the rest had left behind and forsook. And when the Lady St Mary, had washed the swaddling clothes of the Lord Christ, and hanged them out to dry upon a post, the boy possessed with the devil took down one of them, and put it upon his head. And presently the devils began to come out of his mouth, and fly away in the shape of crows and serpents. From that time the boy was healed by the power of the Lord Christ, and he began to sing praises, and give thanks to Lord who had healed him. When his father saw him restored to his former state of health, he said, My son, what has happened to thee, and by what means wert thou cured? The son answered, When the devil seized me, I went into the inn, and there found a very handsome woman with a boy, whose swaddling clothes she had just before washed, and hanged out upon a post. One of these I took, and put it upon my head, and immediately the devils left me, and fled away. At this the father exceedingly rejoiced, and said, My son, perhaps this boy is the son of the living God, who made the heavens and the earth. For as soon as he came amongst us, the idol was broken, and all the gods fell down and were destroyed by a greater power. Then was fulfilled the prophecy, which said, Out of Egypt I have called my son.

(*From the first Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ*, ch. xv.)

THE BOY JESUS MAKES CLAY ANIMALS TO WALK, &C.

And when the Lord Jesus was seven years of age, he was on a certain day with other boys his companions about the same age. Who when they were at play, made clay into several shapes, namely asses, oxen, birds, and other figures. Each boasting of his work, and endeavouring to exceed the rest. Then the Lord Jesus said to the boys, I will command these figures which I have made to walk.

And immediately they moved, and when he commanded them to return they returned. He had also made the figures of birds and sparrows, which, when he commanded to fly, did fly, and when he commanded to stand still, did stand still; and if he gave them meat and drink, they did eat and drink. When at length the boys went away, and related these things to their parents, their fathers said to them, Take heed, children, for the future of his company, for he is a sorcerer; shun and avoid him, and from henceforth never play with him.

On a certain day also, when the Lord Jesus was playing with the boys, and running about, he passed by a dyer's shop, whose name was Salem. And there were in his shop many pieces of cloth belonging to the people of that city, which they designed to dye of several colours. Then the Lord Jesus going into the dyer's shop, took all the cloths and threw them into the furnace. When Salem came home, and saw the cloths spoiled, he began to make a great noise, and to chide the Lord Jesus, saying, What hast thou done to me, O thou son of Mary? Thou hast injured both me and my neighbours; they all desired their cloths of a proper colour; but thou hast come and spoiled them all. The Lord Jesus replied, I will change the colour of every cloth to what colour thou desirest; And then he presently began to take the cloths out of the furnace, and they were all dyed of those same colours which the dyer desired. And when the Jews saw this surprising miracle, they praised God.

(*From the Gospel of Nicodemus*, ch. xiii. *to* xvi. *inclusive.*)

### THE DESCENT OF CHRIST INTO HELL.

O Lord Jesus and Father, who art God, also the resurrection and life of the dead, give us leave to declare thy mysteries, which we saw after death, belonging to thy cross; for we are sworn by thy name. For thou hast forbid thy servants to declare the secret things, which were wrought by thy divine power in hell.

When we were placed with our fathers in the depth of hell, in the blackness of darkness, on a sudden there appeared the colour of the sun like gold, and a substantial purple-coloured light enlightening the place. Presently upon this, Adam, the father of all mankind, with all the patriarchs and prophets, rejoiced and said, That light is the author of everlasting light, who hath promised to translate us to everlasting light. Then Isaiah the prophet cried out and said, This is the light of the Father, and the Son of God, according to my prophecy, when I was alive upon earth. The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim beyond Jordan, a people who walked in darkness, saw a great light; and to them who dwelled in the region

of the shadow of death light is arisen. And now he is come, and enlightened us who sat in death. And while we were all rejoicing in the light which shone upon us our father Simeon came among us and congratulating all the company, said, Glorify the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God. Whom I took up in my arms when an infant in the temple, and being moved by the Holy Ghost, said to him, and acknowledged, That now mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. All the saints who were in the depth of hell, hearing this, rejoiced the more. Afterwards there came forth one like a little hermit, and was asked by every one, Who art thou? To which he replied, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, John the Baptist, and the prophet of the Most High, who went before his coming to prepare his way, to give the knowledge of salvation to his people for the forgiveness of sins. And I John, when I saw Jesus coming to me, being moved by the Holy Ghost, I said, Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. And I baptized him in the river Jordan, and saw the Holy Ghost descending upon him in the form of a dove, and heard a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And now while I was going before him, I came down hither to acquaint you, that the Son of God will next visit us, and, as the day-spring from on high, will come to us, who are in darkness and the shadow of death.

But when the first man our father Adam heard these things, that Jesus was baptized in Jordan, he called out to his son Seth, and said, Declare to yoursons, the patriarchs and prophets, all those things, which thou didst hear from Michael, the archangel, when I sent thee to the gates of Paradise, to entreat God that he would anoint my head when I was sick. Then Seth, coming near to the patriarchs and prophets, said, I Seth, when I was praying to God at the gates of Paradise, beheld the angel of the Lord, Michael, appear unto me saying, I am sent unto thee from the Lord; I am appointed to preside over human bodies. I tell thee Seth, do not pray to God in tears, and entreat him for the oil of the tree of mercy wherewith to anoint thy father Adam for his head-ache; Because thou canst not by any means obtain it till the last day and times, namely, till five thousand five hundred years be past. Then will Christ, the most merciful Son of God, come on earth to raise again the human body of Adam, and at the same time to raise the bodies of the dead, and when he cometh he will be baptized in Jordan; then with the oil of his mercy he will anoint all those who believe on him; and the oil of his mercy will continue to future generations, for those who shall be born of the water and the

Holy Ghost unto eternal life. And when at that time the most merciful Son of God, Christ Jesus, shall come down on earth, he will introduce our father Adam into Paradise, to the tree of mercy. When all the patriarchs and prophets heard all these things from Seth, they rejoiced more.

While all the saints were rejoicing, behold Satan, the prince and captain of death, said to the prince of hell, Prepare to receive Jesus of Nazareth himself, who boasted that he was the Son of God, and yet was a man afraid of death, and said, My soul is sorrowful even to death. Besides he did many injuries to me and to many others; for those whom I made blind and lame and those also whom I tormented with several devils, he cured by his word; yea, and those whom I brought dead to thee he by force takes away from thee. To this the prince of hell replied to Satan, Who is that so powerful prince, and yet a man who is afraid of death? For all the potentates of the earth are subject to my power, whom thou broughtest to subjection by thy power. But if he be so powerful in his human nature, I affirm to thee for truth, that he is almighty in his divine nature, and no man can resist his power. When therefore he said he was afraid of death, he designed to ensnare thee, and unhappy it will be to thee for everlasting ages. Then Satan replying, said to the prince of hell, Why didst thou express a doubt, and wast afraid to receive that Jesus of Nazareth, both thy adversary and mine? As for me, I tempted him and stirred up my old people the Jews with zeal and anger against him; I sharpened the spear for his suffering; I mixed the gall and vinegar, and commanded that he should drink it; I prepared the cross to crucify him, and the nails to pierce through his hands and feet; and now his death is near at hand, I will bring him hither, subject both to thee and me. Then the prince of hell answering, said, Thou saidst to me just now, that he took away the dead from me by force. They who have been kept here till they should live again upon earth, were taken away hence, not by their own power, but by prayers made to God, and their almighty God took them from me. Who then is that Jesus of Nazareth that by his word hath taken away the dead from me without prayer to God? Perhaps it is the same who took away from me Lazarus, after he had been four days dead, and did both stink and was rotten, and of whom I had possession as a dead person, yet he brought him to life again by his power. Satan answering, replied to the prince of hell, It is the very same person, Jesus of Nazareth. Which when the prince of hell heard, he said to him, I adjure thee by the powers which belong to thee and me, that thou bring him not to me. For when I heard of the power of his word, I trembled for fear, and all my impious company were at the same disturbed; and we were

not able to detain Lazarus, but he gave himself a shake, and with all the signs of malice, he immediately went away from us; and the very earth in which the dead body of Lazarus was lodged presently turned him out alive. And I know now that he is Almighty God who could perform such things, who is mighty in his dominion, and mighty in his human nature, who is the Saviour of mankind. Bring not therefore this person hither, for he will set at liberty all those whom I hold in prison under unbelief, and bound with the fetters of their sins, and will conduct them to everlasting life.

And while Satan and the prince of hell were discoursing thus to each other, on a sudden there was a voice as of thunder and the rushing of winds, saying, Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lift up, O everlasting gates, and the King of Glory shall come in. When the prince of hell heard this, he said to Satan, Depart from me, and be gone out of my habitations; if thou art a powerful warrior, fight with the King of Glory. But what hast thou to do with him? And he cast him forth from his habitations. And the prince said to his impious officers, Shut the brass gates of cruelty, and make them fast with iron bars, and fight courageously, lest we be taken captives. But when all the company of the saints heard this they spake with a loud voice of anger to the prince of hell, Open thy gates, that the King of Glory may come in. And the divine prophet David, cried out, saying, Did not I when on earth, truly prophesy and say, O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder. He hath taken them because of their iniquity, and because of their unrighteousness they are afflicted. After this, another prophet, namely, holy Isaiah, spake in like manner to all the saints, Did not I rightly prophesy to you when I was alive on earth? The dead men shall live, and they shall rise again who are in their graves, and they shall rejoice who are in earth; for the dew which is from the Lord, shall bring deliverance to them. And I said in another place, O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? When all the saints heard these things spoken by Isaiah, they said to the prince of hell, Open now thy gates, and take away thine iron bars; for thou wilt now be bound, and have no power. Then was there a great voice, as of the sound of thunder, saying, Lift up your gates, O princes; and be ye lifted up, ye gates of hell, and the King of Glory will enter in. The prince of hell perceiving the same voice repeated, cried out, as though he had been ignorant, Who is that King of Glory? David replied to the prince of hell, and said, I understand the words of that voice, because I spake them by his spirit. And now, as I have above said, I say

unto thee, the Lord strong and powerful, the Lord mighty in battle: he is the King of Glory, and he is the Lord in heaven and in earth; he hath looked down to hear the groans of the prisoners, and to set loose those that are appointed to death. And now, thou filthy and stinking prince of hell, open thy gates, that the King of Glory may come in; for he is the Lord of heaven and earth. While David was saying this, the mighty Lord appeared in the form of a man, and enlightened those places which had ever before been in darkness. And broke asunder the fetters which before could not be broken; and with his invincible power visited those who sate in the deep darkness by iniquity, and the shadow of death by sin.

(*From the first Epistle of Christ*, ch. xii.)

THE RESURRECTION PROVED FROM THE PHŒNIX.

Let us consider that wonderful type of the resurrection which is seen in the eastern countries: that is to say, in Arabia. There is a certain bird called a Phœnix; of this there is never but one at a time: and that lives five hundred years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near, that it must die, it makes itself a nest of frankincense, and myrrh, and other spices, into which, when its time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. But its flesh putrifying, breeds a certain worm, which, being nourished with the juice of the dead bird, brings forth feathers; and when it is grown to a perfect state, it takes up the nest in which the bones of its parent lie, and carries it from Arabia into Egypt, to a city called Heliopolis: and flying in open day in the sight of all men, lays it upon the altar of the sun, and so returns from whence it came. The priests then search into the records of the time; and find that it returned precisely at the end of five hundred years. And shall we then think it to be any very great and strange thing for the Lord of all to raise up those that religiously serve him in the assurance of a good faith, when even by a bird he shows us the greatness of his power to fulfil his promise? For he says in a certain place, Thou shalt raise me up and I shall confess unto thee. And again, I laid me down and slept, and awaked, because thou art with me. And again, Job says, Thou shalt raise up this flesh of mine, that has suffered all these things. Having therefore this hope, let us hold fast to him who is faithful in all his promises, and righteous in all his judgments; who has commanded us not to lie, how much more will he not himself lie? For nothing is impossible with God but to lie. Let his faith then be stirred up again in us; and let us consider that all things are nigh unto him. By the word of his power he made all things; and by the same word he is able (whenever he will) to destroy them.

Who shall say unto him, What dost thou? or who shall resist the power of his strength? When, and as he pleased, he will do all things; and nothing shall pass away of all that has been determined by him. All things are open before him; nor can anything be hid from his counsel. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

(*From the Epistle of Barnabas*, ch. v.)

BAPTISM AND THE CROSS OF CHRIST FORETOLD IN FIGURES UNDER THE LAW.

Let us now inquire whether the Lord took care to manifest anything beforehand concerning water and the cross. Now for the former of these, it is written to the people of Israel how they shall not receive that baptism which brings to forgiveness of sins; but shall institute another to themselves that cannot. For thus saith the prophet: Be astonished, O Heaven! and let the earth tremble at it, because this people have done two great and wicked things: they have left me, the fountain of living water, and have digged for themselves broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Is my holy mountain a Zion, a desolate wilderness?—For ye shall be as a young bird when its nest is taken away. And again the prophet saith, I will go before thee, and will make plain the mountains, and will break the gates of brass, and will snap in sunder the bars of iron; and will give thee dark, and hidden, and invisible treasures, that they may know that I am the Lord God. And again, he shall dwell in the high den of the strong rock. And then, what follows in the same prophet? His water is faithful; ye shall see the king with glory, and your soul shall learn the fear of the Lord. And again he saith in another prophet, He that does these things shall be like a tree planted by the currents of water, which shall give its fruit in its season. Its leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper. As for the wicked, it is not so with them; but they are as the dust which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, neither the sinners in the council of the righteous; for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish. Consider how he has joined both the cross and the water together. For this he saith: Blessed are they who put their trust in the cross, descend into the water; for they shall have their reward in due time: then, saith he, will I give it them. But as concerning the present time, he saith, their leaves shall not

fall: meaning thereby, that every word that shall go out of your mouth shall through faith and charity be to the conversion and hope of many. In like manner doth another prophet speak: And the land of Jacob was the praise of all the earth; magnifying thereby the vessel of his spirit. And what follows?—And there was a river running on the right hand, and beautiful trees grew up by it; and he that shall eat of them shall live for ever: the signification of which is this: that we go down into the water full of sins and pollutions; but come up again, bringing forth fruit; having in our hearts the fear and hope which is in Jesus, by the spirit; and whosoever shall eat of them shall live for ever. That is, whosoever shall hearken to those who call them, and shall believe, shall live for ever.

(*From the first Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians*, ch. ii.)

THE BENEFIT OF SUBJECTION TO THE BISHOP, &c.

For if I in this little time have had such a familiarity with your bishop (I mean not a carnal, but spiritual acquaintance with him); how much more must I think you happy who are so joined to him, as the Church is to Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ to the Father; that so all things may agree in the same unity? Let no man deceive himself; if a man be not within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two be of such force, as we are told; how much more powerful shall that of the bishop and the whole church be? He therefore that does not come together in the same place with it is proud, and has already condemned himself. For it is written, God resisteth the proud. Let us take heed therefore that we do not set ourselves against the bishop, that we may be subject to God. The more any one sees his bishop silent, the more let him revere him. For whomsoever the master of the house sends to be over his own household, we ought in like manner to receive him, as we would do him that sent him. It is therefore evident that we ought to look upon the bishop, even as we would do upon the Lord himself. And indeed Onesimus himself does greatly commend your good order in God: that you all live according to the truth, and that no heresy dwells among you. For neither do ye hearken to any one more than to Jesus Christ, speaking to you in truth. For some there are who carry about the name of Christ in deceitfulness, but do things unworthy of God; whom ye must flee, as ye would do so many wild beasts. For they are ravening dogs, who bite secretly: against whom ye must guard yourselves, as men hardly to be cured. There is one Physician, both fleshly and spiritual; made and not made; God incarnate; true life in death; both of Mary and of God; first passible, then

impassible; even Jesus Christ our Lord. Wherefore let no man deceive you; as indeed neither are ye deceived, being wholly the servants of God. For inasmuch as there is no contention or strife among you, to trouble you, ye must needs live according to God's will. My soul be for yours; and I myself the expiatory offering for your church of Ephesus, so famous throughout the world. They that are of the flesh cannot do the works of the spirit: neither they that are of the spirit the works of the flesh. As he that has faith cannot be an infidel; nor he that is an infidel have faith. But even those things which ye do according to the flesh are spiritual, forasmuch as ye do all things in Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, I have heard of some who have passed by you, having perverse doctrine; whom ye did not suffer to sow among you, but stopped your ears, that ye might not receive those things that were sown by them: as being the stones of the temple of the Father, prepared for his building, and drawn up on high by the cross of Christ, as by an engine. Using the Holy Ghost as the rope: your faith being your support, and your charity the way that leads unto God. Ye are therefore, with all your companions in the same journey, full of God: his spiritual temples, full of Christ, full of holiness: adorned in all things with the commands of Christ. In whom also I rejoice that I have been thought worthy by this present epistle to converse, and joy together with you; that with respect to the other life, ye love nothing but God only.

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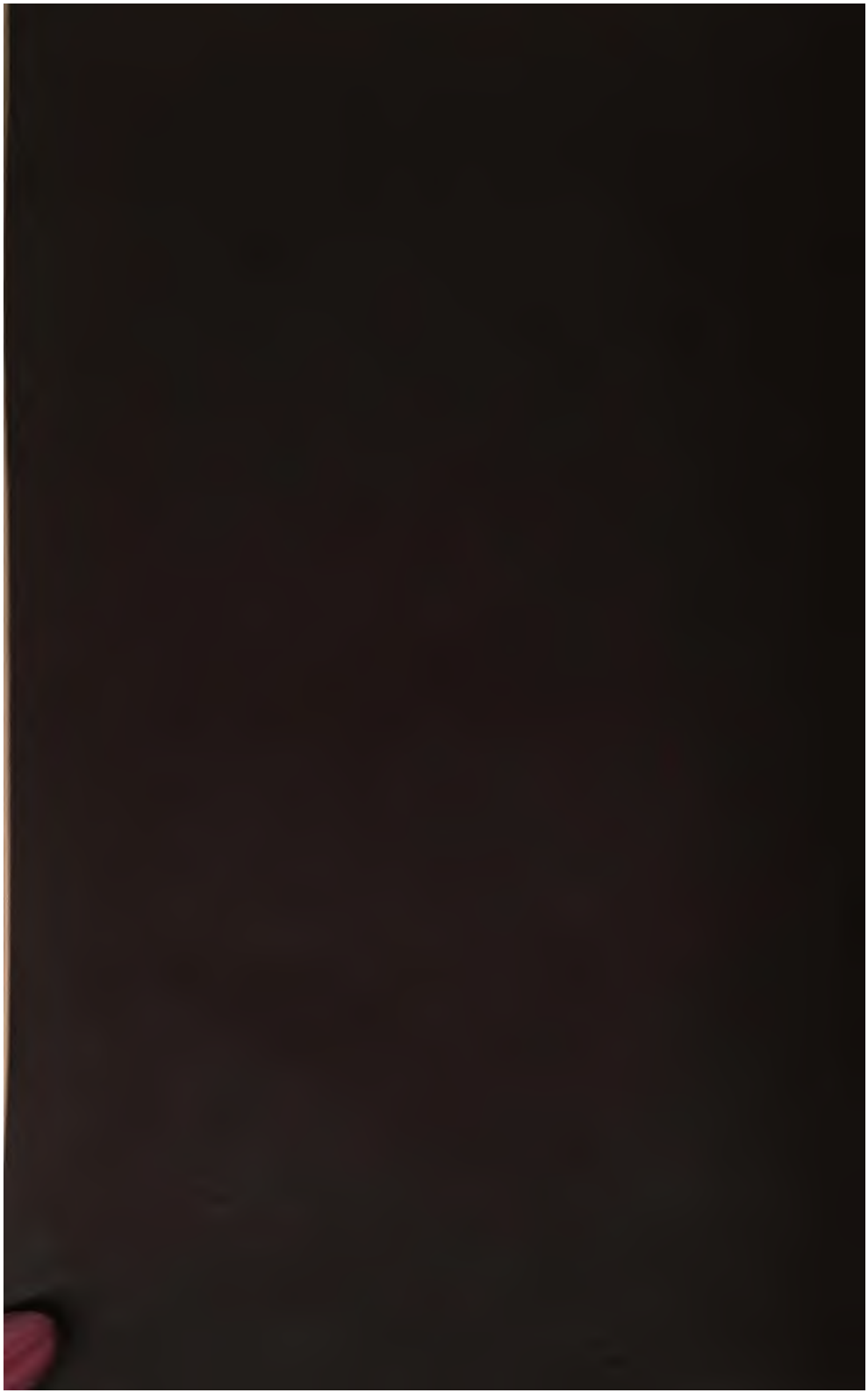

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